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A Journal

of the
Life of
a Soldier







A DIURNAL

For the Changes and Chances of
this Mortal Life.

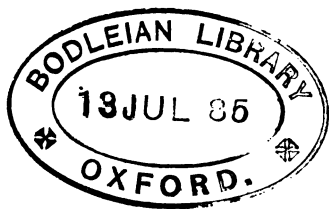
EDITED BY

CATHARINE STURGE.



LONDON:
HATCHARDS, PICCADILLY.
1885.

2535 1.3





To

My Sister Matilda,

And to the dear Memory of

My Sister Jane,

This little Book is Inscribed.





'Benedictus qui venit nomine Domini.'

IN the name and peace of God
I enter this new day.
His grace of sleep hath made me strong ;
His gift of morning wakes my song :
If in His name thou comest, O new day !
Blessed art thou that comest, come what may.

In the strength and faith of God
I tread the solemn way
To meet the things I hoped or feared,
The things I have not guessed or heard.
What if my courage fail in such assay ?
Nay, but I have God's courage, come what may.

In the gentleness of Christ,
O Christ, my soul array,
Lest any outward joy or good
Should shake her inmost lowlihood.
Thou knowest my folly ; prove me not to-day ;
Or touch me with Thy meekness, come what may.

Give me some new hope, my God !
I spent all yesterday.
Indeed Thou knowest my soul of old,
Her ancient evils manifold ;
I am not new, who enter this new day ;—
Let not old sins come on me, come what may.

In the harness of Thy host
Thy soldier arm alway.
Unworthy I their joy, their fame,
The crown of them that overcame ;
And yet—to fight the good fight—once to say
'I kept the field;' this grant me, come what may.

In the truth and light of God
I set my soul, and say,
'To Thy straight gaze accustom me,
Thy strictest, sweetest liberty.
Search me, dread Searcher I try me, cleanse me ; yea,
And in thy truth and light then judge me, come
what may.' B. B. B.



❖* A DIURNAL. *❖

The New Year.

January 1.

PEACE be on the passing year,
And Hope within the new. ANON.

I ASKED the New Year for some motto sweet,
Some rule of life by which to guide my feet.
I asked, and paused—it answered soft and low,
‘God’s will to know.’

‘Will knowledge then suffice, New Year?’ I cried;
But ere the question into silence died,
The answer came: ‘Nay, this remember too,
God’s will to do.’

Once more I asked, ‘Is there still more to tell?’
And once again the answer sweetly fell:
‘Yes! this one thing all other things above.
God’s will to love.’ ANON.

In the harness of Thy host
Thy soldier arm away.
Unworthy I their joy, their fame,
The crown of them that overcame ;
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'Every good Gift from above.'**January 2.**

I KNOW of no higher attribution that can be given to man than that of unselfishness and dutifulness, recognising that the law of his being does not spring from himself, but comes to him from God.

There surely is light and strength somewhere in an ocean-fountain ; the scanty rills of them which we find in ourselves seem to indicate an infinite source from whence they come ; and it is pleasant to find that infinite source a personal being—a Father—a Friend in whom we may trust, to whom we may pour out our hearts.

THOMAS ERSKINE.

Duty.**January 3.**

LIVE on, brave lives, chained to the narrow round
Of duty ; live, expend yourselves, and make
The Orb of Being wheel onward steadfastly
Upon its path—the Lord of Life alone
Knows to what goal of good ; work on, live on.

LEWIS MORRIS.

GIVE unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give,
And in the light of truth Thy bondsman let me live.

WORDSWORTH.

Charity—Love.**January 4.**

CHARITY suffereth long, and is kind . . . is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil . . . beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 7.

LOVE one another in spite of differences, in spite of faults, in spite of the excesses of one or the defects of another. Love one another, and make the best of one another, as He loved us, who, for the sake of saving what was good in the human soul, forgot, forgave, put out of sight what was bad. . . . Make the most of what there is good in institutions, in opinions, in communities, in individuals. It is very easy to do the reverse, to make the worst of what there is of evil, absurd and erroneous. . . . But this was not the new love wherewith we are to love one another.

DEAN STANLEY.

Making the Best of Life.**January 5.**

I SHOULD myself hesitate to say, 'Whatever is, is best;' but I have strong faith that it is *for* the best, and that the general stream of tendency is toward good.

BISHOP THIRLWALL.

MY constant thought makes manifest
I have not what I love the best,
But I must thank God for the rest
While I hold heaven a verity.

JEAN INGELOW.

In Early Death.**January 6.**

Alas me ! that by so frail and feeble thread
Our life is holden—that not life alone,
But all that life has won
May in an hour be gathered to the dead :
The slow additions that build up the mind,
The skill that by temptation we have bought,
And suffering, and whatever has been taught
By lengthened years and converse with our kind,
That all may cease together.

* * * * *

Be strong, be strong,
Ye that remain, nor fruitlessly revolve,
Darkling, the riddles that ye cannot solve,
But do the works that unto you belong ;
Believing that for every mystery,
For all the death, the darkness, and the curse
Of this dim universe
Needs a solution, full of love must be.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

Praise.

January 7.

LET all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.

The heavens are not too high,
His praise may thither flie ;
The earth is not too low,
His praises there may grow.

The church with psalms must shout,
No doore can keep them out ;
But, above all, the heart
Must bear the longest part.

Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.

GEORGE HERBERT.

Trusting for the Future.

January 8.

THOUGH wayside brooks be dried we will not
murmur ;

Though faith may falter, yet we shall not fail ;
God's promise resteth on a groundwork firmer
Than all the doubtings of the faint and frail.

Life's thorny thickets shall not rend our raiment,
Nor shoes wax old ere yet the day be spent ;
One taste of Eshcol's grapes is over-payment
For every bitter herb around our tent.

MRS. F. D. CREWDSON.

Contentment.**January 9.**

CONTENTMENT—which, whatever its immediate shape, to be contentment at all, must be the Will of God—lay beyond. Alas! that men cannot believe that there is such a thing as 'that good and acceptable and perfect Will of God!' To those who do believe it, it is the rejoicing of a conscious deliverance.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

In a City.**January 10.**

LET me move slowly through the street,
Filled with an ever-shifting train,
Amid the sounds of steps that beat
The murmuring walks like autumn rain.

Each, where his tasks or pleasures call,
They pass, and heed each other not.
There is who heeds, who holds them all
In His large love and boundless thought.

These struggling tides of life that seem
In wayward, aimless course to tend,
Are eddies of the mighty stream
That rolls to its appointed end.

W. C. BRYANT.

Religion in Daily Life.

January 11.

WHATSOEVER ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord.

Col. iii. 23.

Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Col. iii. 17.

BUT can, one will say, all such little acts be done to Him? Were it not almost an indignity to bring such little things in reference to His great Majesty? One might rather say, great love shows itself in little acts. So we ourselves feel it in earthly love. Nothing is too little to be done for one deeply loved. In great acts we may please ourselves, have self-satisfaction, be self-complacent. Nothing but deep, fixed love will do unweariedly all little things, not for its own will, but to please whom it loves. Love has the object of its love ever in its eye, its thoughts. It acts spontaneously, because it loves; not to show its love, but because it loves and cannot but so act.

DR. PUSEY.

'Instant in Prayer.'

January 12.

GRANT us to keep at least a prompt desire,

Continual readiness for prayer or praise,

An altar heaped, and waiting to take fire

With the least spark, and leap into a blaze.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

SPONTANEOUSLY to God should tend the soul,

Like the magnetic needle to the pole. T. HOOD.

Youth and Age.**January 13.**

How beautiful is youth ! how bright it gleams
With its illusions, aspirations, dreams !
Book of beginnings, story without end,
Each maid a heroine and each man a friend.
Aladdin's lamp, and Fortunatus' purse
That holds the treasures of the universe !

But age is possibility no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress ;
And as the evening twilight fades away,
The sky is filled with stars invisible by day.

LONGFELLOW.

The Faults of Others.**January 14.**

STUDY to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others of what kind soever, because thou also hast many things which others must bear withal. If thou canst not make thyself such as thou wouldest be, how canst thou have another to thy liking ? We would willingly have others perfect, yet we mend not our own defects.

Thou shouldest, nevertheless, under such hindrances earnestly pray that God may vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them in a kindly spirit.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

JANUARY 15, 16.

A Contented Mind.

January 15.

How happy is he born and taught,
Who serveth not another's will ;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his only skill !
Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied to this vain world by care
Of public fame or private breath !
This man is freed from servile bonds
Of hope to rise or fear to fall,
Lord of himself though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

SIR HENRY WOTTON

In Sorrow.

January 16.

PRAY, pray, thou who weepst,
And the drops will slacken so ;
Weep, weep, the watch thou keepest
With a quicker count will go.
Think :—The shadow on the dial
For the nature most undone,
Marks the passing of the trial,
Proves the presence of the sun.

E. B. BROWNING

Is any among you afflicted ? let him pray.

James v. 1



Benefit of Affliction.

January 19.

Millers learn wisdom through sorrow.
 On my own life, I find all the most
 Are marked by the deathbeds of those
 These were fresh starting-points for
 This must be a common experience.

THOMAS ERSKINE.

Know that I have been afflicted.

Ps. cxix. 71.

In Difficulty.

January 20.

Jesus spake unto them saying, It
 would.

St. Matt. xiv. 27.

Thou! and I can walk
 On the heaving sea,
 In a vexed unquiet way,
 Because I come to Thee.
 Thou art all I hope to gain,
 And all I fear to miss,
 For 'tis a highway for my heart
 Through rougher seas than this.

The waters would not hold me up
 If Thou wert not my end;
 Whom Thou callest to Thyself
 Given wind and waves defend.
 For every perils shut us in
 To Thy supporting care,
 For venture on the awful deep,
 And find our courage there.

A. L. WARING.

Loneliness.**January 17.**

LIGHT flashes in the gloomiest sky,
And music in the dullest plain,
For there the lark is soaring high
Over her flat and leafless reign,
And chanting in so blithe a tone,
It shames the weary heart to feel itself alone.

KEBLE.

WE may look home, and seek in vain
A fond fraternal heart,
But Christ hath given His promise plain
To do a Brother's part.

KEBLE.

Noble Work.**January 18.**

THE work a man does for himself and his own sake *only* is always done in a poor spirit. . . . If we work for ourselves only, we must be selfish; and no selfish work can be a noble work, nor can any workman or man of business, who simply works for himself alone, be a noble-hearted or high-minded man. It is noble in some degree if we work and deny ourselves, and are patient in working for our families and friends; it is nobler if we work for the public good; it is noblest of all if we work, as our Master worked, for our Father in heaven.

REV. JOHN CONGREVE.

The Benefit of Affliction.

January 19.

THE veriest triflers learn wisdom through sorrow. As I look back on my own life, I find all the most remarkable epochs marked by the deathbeds of those whom I loved. These were fresh starting-points for the character. This must be a common experience.

THOMAS ERSKINE.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted.

Ps. cxix. 71.

In Difficulty.

January 20.

STRAIGHTWAY Jesus spake unto them saying, It is I : be not afraid.

St. Matt. xiv. 27.

LORD, it is Thou ! and I can walk
Upon the heaving sea,
Firm in a vexed unquiet way,
Because I come to Thee.
If Thou art all I hope to gain,
And all I fear to miss,
There is a highway for my heart
Through rougher seas than this.

These waters would not hold me up
If Thou wert not my end ;
But whom Thou callest to Thyself
Even wind and waves defend.
Our very perils shut us in
To Thy supporting care,
We venture on the awful deep,
And find our courage there.

A. L. WARING.

Enjoyment of Life.**January 21.**

It so falls out,
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it ; but being lacked and lost,
Why then we rack the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours.

SHAKESPEARE.

WE all seek happiness so eagerly, that in the pursuit we often lose that joyous sense of existence, and those quiet daily pleasures, the value of which our pride alone prevents us from acknowledging.

SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

Old Age.**January 22.**

WHO can peer
Into another soul, or tell at all
What hidden energies befall
The aged lingering here ?
When all the weary brain
Seems dull, the immeasurable fields of life
Lie open to the memory, and again
They know the youthful joys, the hurry and the strife,
And feel, but gentlier now, the ancient pain.
In the uneasy vigils of the night
Before the tardy light,
There come such long processions of the dead,
That round them stands a blessed company,
Holding high converse, though no word be said,
Till only what is past and gone doth seem
To live, and all the Present is a dream.

LEWIS MORRIS.

Christ our Life.**January 23.**

How can I express my conviction of the depth of wisdom and instruction to be learned from Christ's character, His teaching, His work, if only we set ourselves not to repeat phrases respecting Him, but to ask and to seek out what He really was and is to us, what He really taught, what He really did? It may be that our search will be constantly baffled, but it will more often be that even the humblest will be amply rewarded, even the most aspiring will find that by penetrating behind that veil he has gained a power that he never found elsewhere; that he has found a new footing and seen a new life in every Scripture which tells him of the Word made Flesh.

DEAN STANLEY.

Self-Examination.**January 24.**

By all means use sometimes to be alone,
Salute thyself: see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest; for 'tis thine own,
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.

Summe up at night what thou hast done by day,
And in the morning what thou hast to do.

GEORGE HERBERT.

AND none can say but alle my lyffe
I have His wordyes kept,
And summed the actions of the day
Eche nighte before I slept.

CHATTERTON.

' Reaching forward to Things before.'**January 25.**

'Tis joy to think
That every reaching forth to good that's given
Is but a new and golden link
Between the earth and heaven ;
That (whatso'er our spirit-zone may be)
Love to Thee, Lord, means ever love from Thee.

Nathless, would I begin
By telling all my sin,
Which yet cannot be told !
How shall I separate new things from old ?
Nor needs it now unfold
The dismal history of a wasted prime ;
Better to use this richly dowered time
In pressing straight
To heaven's gate,
And handing in my cause to man's great Advocate.

R. B. RUTTER.**The Struggle of Life.****January 26.**

THOU knowest all our weeping, fainting, striving,
Thou know'st how very hard it is *to be* ;
How hard to rouse faint will not yet reviving,
To do the pure thing, trusting unto Thee :
To hold Thou art there, although no face we see :
How hard to think, through cold, and dark and dearth,
That Thou art nearer now than when eye-seen on
earth.

G. MACDONALD.

Difficulty.**January 27.**

DIFFICULTY is a severe instructor, set over us by the supreme ordinance of a parental Guardian and Legislator, who knows us better than we know ourselves, as He loves us better too. Our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations : it will not suffer us to be superficial.

BURKE.

Aspiration.**January 28.**

GREAT God of spirits ! I would live in Thee,
At home, or far, beneath Thy sheltering shield ;
When I repose, Thy blessing fall on me,
Gently as summer dew on thirsty field !
And when I wake at morn, Thy spirit yield
Light, like the glorious burst of rising sun.
At noon, at night, with Thine approval sealed ;
With Thee all ended as with Thee begun.
No higher wish have angels,—nor would I ,
Than this—with Thee to live, to move, to die.

JAMES EDMESTON.

Religion and Duty.**January 29.**

RELIGION is to care much and care always for doing your duty.

I am not saying that Christ taught us nothing else ; I am not saying that morality is religion. He came as the great Revealer of God : He came to throw light on our present and our future, to give men guidance and hope : He came as a Saviour and Redeemer, as the Light of the world, and Revealer of the Father. But I am saying that the sum and substance of His teaching as regards the *expression* of our feeling towards God whom He revealed, was that this expression, this religion, consisted in a keen sensibility and loyal obedience to God's will ; or, to express this in the plainest way, it is to care much, and to care always, for doing our duty.

REV. J. M. WILSON.

The Indwelling Spirit.**January 30.**

THERE is a Holy Spirit throned within us (of our good and evil deeds the Guardian and Observer), who draws towards us as we draw towards Him.

SENECA.

THE Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

Rom. viii. 16.

The Potter's Wheel.

January 31.

TURN, turn, my wheel ! this earthen jar,
A touch can make, a touch can mar :

And shall it to the Potter say,
What makest Thou? Thou hast no hand?
As men who think to understand
A world by their Creator planned,
Who wiser is than they. LONGFELLOW.



→* FEBRUARY. *←

Praise.

February 1.

PRAISE to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days !
Bounteous source of every joy,
Let Thy praise our tongues employ.

A. L. BARBAULD.

THUS my Creator ! thus the more
My spirit's wing to Thee can soar,
The more she triumphs to behold
Thy love in all Thy works unfold,
And bids her hymns of rapture be
Most glad when rising most to Thee !

MRS. HEMANS.

Peace of Mind.

February 2.

I THINK there is such a thing as peace of conscience even in this life. I do not mean careless peace, or heedless peace. I mean a calm consciousness of an understanding, so to speak, between the soul and its Lord. Unless a Christian is aware of having on hand an idol dearer than God, I see no reason why he should not live in peace, even while he is aware that he is not yet finished (perfect).

E. PRENTISS.

Death.

February 3.

ONE by one we miss the voices which we loved so
well to hear ;

One by one the kindly faces in that shadow disappear.
Yet upon the mist before us fix thine eyes with closer
view ;

See, beneath its sullen skirts, the rosy morning
glimmers through.

One whose feet the thorns have wounded passed that
barrier and came back,

With a glory on His footsteps lighting yet the dreary
track.

Boldly enter where He entered ; all that seems but
darkness here,

When thou once hast passed beyond it, haply shall be
crystal clear.

Viewed from that serener realm, the walks of human
life may lie

Like the page of some familiar volume, open to thine
eye.

* * * * *

Till beyond the border where that brooding mystery
bars the sight,

Those whom thou hast fondly cherished stand with
thee in peace and light.

W. C. BRYANT.

The Dawn of Sunday (in Sickness).**February 4.**

It was upon a sick and sleepless bed,
Harassed by fever and perturbed by thought,
With mind unquiet and with weary head,
Seeking the slumber which in vain I sought,
That the slow hours dragged heavily away,
And every knell I counted as it past,
Till the long numbered period came at last,
Which closed the week, and oped the Sabbath-day.
Sudden methought I heard a chorus rise,
The ravishment of music from afar,
The Sabbath hymning of each heavenly star,
The distant sound of angel symphonies :
Then, sweetly lulled, a calm stole o'er my breast,
And all my spirit sank in quiet rest.

JAMES EDMESTON.

The Path of Peace.**February 5.**

O PEACEFUL thought ! O happy rest !
To walk with Jesus, and be blest ;
To feel Him near when tempests roll,
And have His sunshine in the soul.

Ah, Jesus, Master, may we meet
Life's changes resting at Thy feet ;
With sweet content to do Thy will,
To work, to suffer, or be still !

ELIZABETH AYTON GODWIN.

For a Nurse.**February 6.**

TAKE up the lesson, O my heart ;
Thou Lord of meekness, write it there,
Thine own meek self to me impart
Thy lofty hope, Thy lowly prayer.

Too happy, on my silent path,
If now and then allowed, with Thee
Watching some placid, holy death,
Thy secret work of love to see :

But oh, most happy, should Thy call,
Thy welcome call, at last be given—
'Come where thou long hast stored thy all,
Come see thy place prepared in heaven.'

KRBLE.

The Presence of Christ.**February 7.**

HE who can bear the weight of his own thoughts
Is not alone, for wisdom is his guest ;
How few can hold such lofty fellowship !

* * * * *

Yet we are made for action, and need here
Not life in heaven, but rather heavenly life
Transplanted, making pure the air we breathe.
'Lo, I am with you alway'—Yes, Thou art,
Nor with us least when most we mourn Thy loss.
Thou only art, we but exist in Thee,
Yet Thy unseen though living bond of love
Links earth to heaven, and lifts us up to God.

R. B. RUTTER.

In Prospect of Difficult Duty.**February 8.**

SHRINK thou not, nor be faint-hearted
In untoward circumstance—
Fires are quenched and waters parted
For the saints' deliverance ;
Fear thou not what may befall thee,
Boldly go where duties call thee.

J. E. B. (from *The Dove on the Cross*.)

FEAR thou not ; for I am with thee : be not
dismayed ; for I am thy God : I will strengthen
thee ; yea, I will help thee. Isa. xli. 10.

'The fruit of the Spirit.'**February 9.**

I AM the true Vine, and my Father is the Husband-
man. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch
cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine ;
no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. He that
abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth
much fruit.

John, xv. 1, 4, 5.

THE fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-
suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness,
temperance.

Gal. v. 22, 23.

THE husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit
of the earth, and hath long patience for it.

James, v. 7.

The Healthy Religious Life.**February 10.**

RELIGION does not censure nor exclude
Unnumbered pleasures harmlessly pursued :
To study culture, and with artful toil
To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil ;
To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands
The grain, or herb, or plant that each demands ;
To cherish virtue in a humble state,
And share the joys your bounty may create ;
To mark the matchless workings of the power
That shuts within its seed the future flower,
Sends Nature forth the daughter of the skies
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes ;
To teach the canvas innocent deceit,
To lay the landscape on the snowy sheet—
These, these, are arts pursued without a crime,
That leave no stain upon the wing of time.

COWPER.

Amiability.**February 11.**

AMIABILITY may be regarded as one of the highest of the Christian virtues. Like all others, it can only be acquired by the Lord's divine help. Self-sacrifice is the first requisite to amiability, and its truest test. It is easy to be amiable when we can have our own way at the same time, but to give up one's own will in order to please others is more difficult, and is a crucial test of our motives.

O. PRESCOTT HILLER.

EVEN Christ pleased not Himself.

Rom. xv. 3.

Birth.

February 12.

MYSTERIOUS to all thought
A mother's prime of bliss,
When to her eager lips is brought
Her infant's thrilling kiss.
O never shall it set, the sacred light
Which dawns that moment on her tender gaze,
In the eternal distance blending bright
Her darling's hope and hers, for love and joy and
praise.

KEBLE.

FOR this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given
me my petition which I asked of Him. My heart
rejoiceth in the Lord.

1 Sam. i. 27; ii. 1.

Joy in Sorrow.

February 13.

NEVER so glad as when the heart is broken !
Never so happy as when brought most low !
'Tis then the tender words of peace are spoken,
'Tis then that tears of gladness rise and flow—
'Tis a hard lesson, hard and slowly taught,
That we are worthless still as in the past,
That we who once our sins and follies brought,
Have little else to bring—from first to last.
'Tis a hard lesson, and we often wait
In outer darkness, longing for the light,
Because we fear to enter through the gate,
And still so poor, into His holy sight—
Wait on the threshold while He waits within,
With such a welcome beaming from His face !
This is the privilege He died to win,
To stretch to all the sceptre of His grace.

MATILDA STURGE.

To Them.**February 14.**

THERE are who say the world is drear,
A baffling maze of sins and pains,
Where mortals crouch in wildering fear,
And death o'er every homestead reigns.

But earth is not a place of tombs,
In spite of all that cynics say,
For God hath sent forth balms and blooms
To heal the plague and scent the way.

And tribute rich and ample hoard
Bear witness to rebuke the wrong ;
And Nature vindicates her Lord
In buoyant life and woodland song.

J. MORLEY PUNSHON.

How to Work.**February 15.**

A RIGHT application to work requires two things : First, that we perceive clearly what we have to do, and in what manner we ought to do it. Secondly, that we aim at doing our work in the very best way we can, and at doing it in the shortest time in which we can do it well. Now all that hinders these objects is bad—whether it be gossip or laughter, singing or praying, mirth or sadness. And whoever falls into any of these errors, and thus fails in application to work (the work which is ordained by the same God who ordained prayer and praise), whoever, I say, falls into these errors, whether it be by levity, or a false conception of devotion, will certainly be in some way chastened by God.

J. F. OBERLIN.

Duty.

February 16.

Do the duty that lies nearest to thee ; thy second duty will already have become clearer.

T. CARLYLE.

FOR Knowledge is a steep that few may climb,
While Duty is a path that all may tread.

LEWIS MORRIS.

Wakeful Nights.

February 17.

COME to me, gentle Sleep !
I pine, I pine for thee ;
Come with thy spells, the soft, the deep,
And set my spirit free !
Each lonely, burning thought,
In twilight languor steep—
Come to the full heart, long o'erwrought,
O gentle, gentle Sleep.

Come with thine urn of dew,
Sleep, gentle Sleep ; yet bring
No voice, love's yearning to renew,
No vision on thy wing.
Come as to folding flowers,
To birds in forests deep—
Long, dark, and dreamless be thine hours
O gentle, gentle Sleep !

MRS. HEMANS.

'The Beatific Vision.'

February 18.

SUDDENLY, as if it lightened,
An unwonted splendour brightened
All within him and without him
In that narrow cell of stone :
And he saw the blessed Vision
Of our Lord with light Elysian,
Like a vesture wrapped about Him,
Like a garment round Him thrown.

Not as crucified and slain,
Not in agonies of pain,
Not with bleeding hands and feet,
Did the Monk his Master see ;
But as in the village street,
In the house or harvest-field,
Halt, and lame, and blind He healed,
When He walked in Galilee. LONGFELLOW.

'Our Ignorance in Asking.'

February 19.

FOR when, by earth's cross-lights perplexed,
We ask the things that should not be ;
God, reading right our erring text,
Grants what we would ask, could we see. ANON.

Peace.**February 20.**

NEVER so truly happy :
I know myself now ; and I feel within me
A peace above all earthly dignities,—
A still and quiet conscience. SHAKESPEARE.

IT takes not much to make a feast of joy
In hearts where Jesus dwells. Dull, tedious days,
Small taste of love, and lack of human praise ;
Hours holding less of comfort than annoy,
All adverse circumstances He can employ
To show how powerless every changing phase
Of life, how futile man's malicious ways,
His children's calm to trouble or destroy.

J. E. A. BROWN.

Infancy.**February 21.**

OUR birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar :
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home :
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !

WORDSWORTH.

Apparent Failure.**February 22.**

BUT noble souls through dust and heat
Rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger ;
And conscious still of the divine
Within them, lie on earth supine
No longer.

LONGFELLOW.

NEITHER despair nor hurry, but set to work with the steady purpose of one who knows that God is on his side ; and that though He bids us 'work while it is called To-day,' yet the great Husbandman is patient.

OCTAVIA HILL.

In Discouragement.**February 23.**

NOR does the advancement of the spiritual life consist so much in having the grace of consolation, as in bearing the withdrawal of it with humility, resignation, and patience ; so as not to grow remiss in the earnestness of thy prayer at that time, nor suffer thine other wonted works to slip altogether away. But that thou willingly do what lies in thee, according to the best of thy ability and understanding, and take care not to neglect thyself wholly through the dryness and anxiety of mind which thou feelest.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

The Death of a Child.**February 24.**

HIS little grave I cannot see,
Though weary months have fled
Since pitying lips bent over me,
And whispered, 'He is dead!'—
Ah! me,
'Tis dreadful to be dead!

I do not mean for one like me—
So weary, worn, and weak,—
Death's shadowy paleness seems to be
Even now upon my cheek,
His seal
On form, and brow, and cheek.

All fearfully, all tearfully,
Alone and sorrowing,
My dim eye lifted to the sky,
Fast to the cross I cling.
O Christ!

To Thy dear cross I cling. EMILY JUDSON.

'Fellow-Workers with God.'**February 25.**

WITHOUT the hope based on the faith that we are fellow-workers together with God, without the love stimulated by the revelation of Divine love, without the sense of a power guiding and correcting our ill-regulated emotions, our work cannot be satisfactorily done.

BROOKE LAMBERT.

On Leaving Home.**February 26.**

THY glorious eye pervadeth space ;
Thou'rt present, Lord, in every place ;
And wheresoe'er my lot may be
Still shall my spirit cling to Thee—
To Thee, my God, to Thee !

Renouncing every worldly thing,
Safe 'neath the covert of Thy wing,
My sweetest thought henceforth shall be,
That all I want I find in Thee,
In Thee, my God, in Thee !

J. F. OBERLIN. (*Translated by Mrs. Daniel Wilson.*)

Early Death.**February 27.**

AND fear to sorrow with increase of grief,
When they who go before,
Go furnished, or because their span was brief.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

IT is not growing like a tree
In bulk doth make man better be :
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, brown, and sere ;
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May:
Although it fall and die that night,
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see ;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

BEN JONSON.

Light in Darkness.**February 28.**

How dark, how desolate
Would many a moment be,
Could we not spring
On hope's bright wing
O God, to Heaven and Thee !
And sometimes streaks of light
And sunny beams we see,
They shine so bright
Through sorrow's night
They need must come from Thee !

*From the Greek.***The Power of Prayer.****February 29.**

I DO believe ; and yet, in grief,
I pray for help to unbelief ;
For needful strength aside to lay
The daily cumberings of my day.

J. G. WHITTIER.

PRAYER is the secret, to myself I said,
Strong supplication must call down the charm ;
And thus with untuned heart I prayed,
Knocking at Heaven's gate with palsied arm.

KEELY.

→* MARCH. *←

The Lessons of Spring.

March 1.

THE stormy March is come at last,
With wind, and cloud, and changing skies ;
I hear the rushing of the blast,
That through the snowy valley flies.

Ah, passing few are they who speak,
Wild, stormy month ! in praise of thee ;
Yet, though thy winds are loud and bleak,
Thou art a welcome month to me.

For thou to northern lands again
The glad and glorious sun doth bring,
And thou hast joined the gentle train,
And wear'st the gentle name of Spring.

Thou bring'st the hope of those calm skies,
And that soft time of sunny showers,
When the wide bloom on earth that lies
Seems of a brighter world than ours.

W. C. BRYANT.

The Floor and the Beam.

March 2.

WHEN we ourselves least kindly are
 We deem the world malignant :
 Dark hearts, in flowers where honey lies,
 Only the poison find.

We paint from self the evil things
 We think that others are,
 While to the self-despising soul
 All things but self are fair.

Yes, they have caught the way of God,
 To whom self lies displayed
 In such clear vision as to cast
 O'er others' faults a shade.

FABER.

A Noble Ambition.

March 3.

O MAY I join the choir invisible
 Of those immortal dead who live again
 In minds made better by their presence : live
 In pulses stirred to generosity,
 In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
 For miserable aims that end with self,
 In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
 And with their mild persistence urge men's search
 To vaster issues.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Christ's Presence.**March 4.**

THUS often when we feel alone,
Nor help nor comfort near,
'Tis only that our eyes are dim,
Doubting and sad we see not Him
Who waiteth still to hear.

Open our eyes, O Lord, we pray,
To see our way—our Guide,
That by the path that here we tread,
We, following on, may still be led
In Thy light to abide. L. N. R.

JESUS Himself drew near and went with them.
But their eyes were holden that they should not know
Him.

St. Luke, xxiv. 15, 16.

True Enjoyment of Life.**March 5.**

MEANWHILE the joy whereby we ought to live,
Neglected or unheeded, disappears.
Wiser it were to welcome and make ours
Whate'er of good, though small, the present brings—
Kind greetings, sunshine, song of birds, and flowers,
With a child's pure delight in little things.
And of the griefs unborn to rest secure,
Knowing that mercy ever will endure.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

'The Peace of God.'**March 6.**

WHAT shall make trouble? not an adverse fate,
Not chilling poverty or worldly care;
They who are treading to a better state
Want but that peace to make them feel they are :
Care o'er life's little day
The tempest-clouds may roll,
Peace o'er its eve shall play,
The moonlight of the soul. ANON.

The Skylark.**March 7.**

ETHEREAL minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
Or, while thy wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?
WORDSWORTH.

O WELCOME in the cheerful day !
Through rosy clouds the shades retire,
The sun hath touched thy plumes with fire,
And girt thee with a golden ray :
Now shape and voice are vanished quite,
Nor eye nor ear can track thy flight.

But speech of mine can ne'er reveal
Secrets so freely told above,
Yet is their burden joy and love,
And all the bliss a bird can feel,
Whose wing in heaven to earth is bound,
Whose home and heart are on the ground.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

The Happiness of Unselfishness.**March 8.**

THE love that can be always forgetting itself, always studying and considering others, always alert to share their burdens, and to suppress or deny itself in their service, is far from being a joyless thing. Great joy-waves visit and sweep it, that are all its own, and which no man knoweth save he in whose breast it rules ; while in the very heart of its pain-fullest yearnings and solitudes, and its hardest sacrifices, a secret bliss lies smiling, like green verdure beneath the snow.

REV. S. A. TIPPLE.

Aspiration.**March 9.**

'SHOW me Thy glory, gracious Lord !
'Tis Thee,' he cries, 'not Thine, I seek.'
Nay, start not at so bold a word
From man, frail worm, and weak.
The spark of his first deathless fire
Yet buoys him up, and, high above
The holiest creature, dares aspire
To the Creator's love.

KEBLE.

SHOW us Thy glory, Lord !
That in our lives may shine,
Reflected from Thy face,
The character divine.
Renewed and reconciled,
We, Abba, Father, pray
For grace, till glory shine,
In heaven's eternal day.

JANET HAMILTON.

Sisterly Love.**March 10.**

THERE is no friendship like a sister,
In calm or stormy weather,
To cheer one on the tedious way,
To fetch one if one goes astray,
To lift one if one totters down,
To strengthen while one stands.

C. ROSSETTI.

Old Age.**March 11.**

YOUTH, large and loving ; Youth, full of grace,
force, fascination ? Do you know that Old Age may
come after you, with equal grace, force, fascination ?

WALT WHITMAN.

THOUGH Youth may boast the curls that flow
In sunny waves of autumn glow,
As graceful on thy hoary head
Has Time the robe of honour spread,
And there, oh softly, softly shed
His wreath of snow.

And as the parting beams of day
On mountain snows reflected play,
And tints of roseate lustre shed ;
Thus on the snow that crowns thy head
May joy, with evening planet, shed
His mildest ray !

MRS. HEMANS.

Infancy.

March 12.

O LITTLE child !
 Stretched on thy mother's knees with steadfast gaze
 And innocent aspect mild,
 Viewing this novel scene in mute amaze,
 Following the moving light, thy mother's smile :
 How shall I dare to mark thy innocent look,
 And write as in a book
 Thy infinite possibilities of life ;
 What fate awaits thee in the coming strife,
 What joys, what triumphs in the growing years,
 What depths of woe and tears? LEWIS MORRIS.

THE Lord bless thee and keep thee ;
 The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and
 be gracious unto thee. Num. vi. 24, 25.

Love to Christ.

March 13.

WHEN I think of that blessed Man of God,
 crucified on the Cross, and uttering those blessed
 words, ' Father, forgive them ; they know not what
 they do ; ' oh ! I feel that I must love that Being.
 I feel that there is something within me which is
 touched by these sweet, heavenly utterances ; I feel
 that I must love Christ. CHUNDER SEN.

AND I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw
 all men unto me. St John, xii. 32.

Friendship in Sorrows.**March 14.**

OR if perchance a saddened heart,
That once was gay and felt the spring,
Cons slowly o'er its altered part
In sorrow and remorse to sing,
God's gracious care will send that way
Some spirit full of glee, yet taught
To bear the sight of dull decay,
And nurse it with all-pitying thought ;
Cheerful as soaring lark, and mild
As evening blackbird's full-toned lay,
When the relenting sun has smiled
Bright through a whole December day.
How timely then a comrade's song
Comes floating on the mountain air,
And bids thee yet be bold and strong—
Fancy may die, but Faith is there. **KEBLE.**

Giving.**March 15.**

WE love men more for what we do for them than
for what we receive from them. **BISHOP THIRLWALL.**

REMEMBER the words of the Lord Jesus when He
said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Acts, xx. 35.

In Prospect of Difficult Duty.**March 16.**

I SAID, This task is keen—
But even while I spake, Thou, Love Divine,
Didst stand behind, and gently over-lean
My drooping form, and oh ! what task had been
Too stern for feebleness with help of Thine ?
Spell Thou this lesson with me, line by line,
The sense is rigid, but the voice is dear ;
Guide Thou my hand within that Hand of Thine—
Thy wounded Hand !—until its tremblings take
Strength from Thy touch, and even for Thy sake
Trace out each character in outline clear.

DORA GREENWELL.

‘Patience under our Sufferings.’**March 17.**

I HOPE—for there are things to learn
Which Thou art near to teach ;
High things that patience does its part
To bring within our reach :
And soon the end, when hope shall fail,
Its holy service done,
As fails the treasure of the dawn
Before the risen sun.

A. L. WARING.

A PATIENT man will bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall spring up unto him.

Ecclesiasticus, i. 23.

The Past and the Future.**March 13.**

I WILL not wake the Past—it lies
In Memory's arms asleep. M. S.

THEN said I, 'From its consecrated cerements
I will not drag this sacred dust again,
Only to give me pain.

But, still remembering all the lost endearments,
Go on my way, like one who looks before,
And turns to weep no more.'

Amid what friendly greetings and caresses,
What households, though not alien, yet not mine,
What bowers of rest divine ;

To what temptation in lone wildernesses,
What famine of the heart, what pain and loss,
The bearing of what cross,

I do not know ; nor will I vainly question
Those pages of the mystic book, which hold
The story still untold ;

But without rash conjecture or suggestion,
Turn its last leaves in reverence and good heed,
Until 'The End' I read.

LONGFELLOW.

Duty.**March 19.**

As the granite rock has been fused and wrought together by a central fire, without which it could not have existed at all, so also the Christian law of Duty, in order to perform fully its work in the world, must have been warmed at the heart and fed at the source by a central fire of its own—and that central fire is Love—the gracious, kindly, generous, admiring, tender movements of the human affections; and that central fire itself is kept alive by the consciousness that there has been in the world a Love beyond all human love, a devouring fire of Divine enthusiasm on behalf of our race, which is the Love of Christ.

DEAN STANLEY.

‘They Live whom we call Dead.’**March 20.**

WEEP not for me ;
Be blithe as wont, nor tinge with gloom
The stream of love that circles home,
Light hearts and free !
Joy in the gifts Heaven’s bounty sends,
Nor miss my face, dear friends !

I still am near ;
Watching the smiles I prized on earth,
Your converse mild, your blameless mirth ;
Now too I hear
Of whispered sounds the tale complete,
Low prayers, and nursings sweet.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

Prayer for those at Sea.**March 21.**

THY providence, O Father, hast made a way in the sea, and a safe path in the waves ; showing that Thou canst save from all danger ; yea, though a man went to sea without art. Therefore do men commit their lives to a small piece of wood, and passing the rough sea in a weak vessel are saved.

Wisdom, xiii. 3-5.

A Golden Wedding-Day.**March 22.**

THE night is fair,
The storm of grief, the clouds of care,
The wind, the rain, have passed away ;
The lamps are lit, the fires burn bright,
The house is full of life and light—
It is the golden wedding-day.

* * * * *

O fortunate, O happy day !
The people sing, the people say :
The ancient bridegroom and the bride
Smiling contented and serene
Upon the blithe, bewildering scene,
Behold, well pleased, on every side
Their forms and features multiplied,
As the reflection of a light
Between the burnished mirrors gleams,
Or lamps upon a bridge at night
Stretch on and on before the sight,
Till the long vista endless seems.

LONGFELLOW.

Change of Place.**March 23.**

WHILE place we seek or place we shun
The soul finds happiness in none ;
But with a God to guide our way
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

Could I be cast where Thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot ;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all.

MADAME GUION. (*Translated by Cowper.*)

IF Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up
hence.

Exod. xxxiii. 15.

Rejoicing.**March 24.**

IT is a pleasant pilgrimage,
Though many count it drear ;
There are, at every weary stage,
So many things to cheer.

There is so many a halting-spot,
Soft, beautiful, and sweet ;
And many a green and dewy plot,
Where streams of gladness meet.

MRS. J. D. CREWDSON.

I WILL sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever :
with my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness.

Ps. lxxxix. 1.

In Looking on the House.

March 25.

FOR oh, beloved house, what time I render
My last look back on thee, I grow more tender.
My blood is stirred, and love that leaveth its play
From all sweet customs, moves mine heart thy way.

* * * * *

And oh, my father's roof, the memory leaves
Such pangs as break my heart, beloved eaves !
But God's word conquers all.

God keep thee, house ;

God keep thee, faithful corner, where I drew
So calm a breath of life !

Whate'er He willeth to be done

His will makes easy. JOHN OF EUCHAITA (11th Century).
(Translated by E. B. Browning.)

The Privileges of Middle Life.

March 26.

AND this entering into sympathy with the struggle of humanity he prepared his pupil to receive in after years (for it is a lesson that cannot be fully learnt until middle life is approached) : that kindly love of humanity ; that sympathy with its smallest interests ; that toleration of its errors, and of its conflicting opinions ; that interest in local and familiar affairs, in which the highest culture is at one with the unlearned and rustic mind.

JOHN INGLESANT.

A Mind at Ease.**March 27.**

THRICE happy she that is so well assured
Unto herself, and settled so in heart,
That neither will for better be allured,
Ne fears to worse with any chance to start ;
But like a steady ship doth strongly part
The raging waves, and keeps her course aright ;
Ne ought for tempest doth from it depart,
Ne ought for fairer weather's false delight.

SPENSER.

Marriage.**March 28.**

'TILL death us part,'
So speaks the heart
When each to each repeats the words of doom ;
Through blessing and through curse,
For better and for worse,
We will be one till that dread hour shall come.
Life, with its myriad grasp,
Our yearning souls shall clasp,
By ceaseless love and still expectant wonder,
In bonds that shall endure,
Indissolubly sure,
Till God in death shall part our souls asunder.
Till death us join—
A voice yet more divine !
That to the broken heart breathes hope sublime,
Through lonely hours
And shattered powers,
We still are one despite of change and time.

DEAN STANLEY.

‘Emmanuel—God with us.’

March 29.

IN busy mart and crowded street,
No less than in the still retreat,
Thou, Lord, art near our souls to bless,
With all a parent's tenderness.

BAPTIST W. NOEL.

THERE are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide,
Of the everlasting chime ;
Who carry music in their heart,
Through dusky lane and busy mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

KEBLE.

Growing Old.

March 30.

TURN, turn my wheel ! 'Tis nature's plan,
The child should grow into the man,
The man grow wrinkled, old, and grey.
In youth the heart exults and sings,
The pulses leap, the feet have wings ;
In age the cricket chirps and brings
The harvest-home of day.

LONGFELLOW.

EVEN to your old age I am He ; and even to hoar
hairs I will carry you.

Isa. xlv. 4.

Night.

March 31.

SILENCE all around prevailing,
Nature hushed in slumber sweet,
No rude noise mine ears assailing,
Now my God and I can meet :
Universal Nature slumbers,
And my soul partakes the calm,
Breathes her ardour out in numbers,
Plaintive song or lofty psalm.

MADAME GUION. (*Translated by Cowper.*)

→* APRIL. *←

April.

April 1.

EMBLEM of life ! see changeful April sail
In varying vest along the shadowy skies,
Now bidding Summer's softest zephyrs rise,
Anon recalling Winter's stormy gale,
And pouring from her cloud its sudden hail ;
Then, smiling through the tear that dims her eyes,
While Iris with her braid the welkin dyes,
Promise of sunshine, not so prone to fail.
So Hope exultant spreads her æry sail,
And from the present gloom the soul conveys
To distant summer and far happier days.

H. KIRKE WHITE.

Bereavement.

April 2.

THEY rest ;—but we, the living, pour
Our soul-rain on their opened graves ;
Such small relief our nature craves.
They knew our hearts' true love before ;
Haply—not all unconscious—now they know it more.
Sorrow may not become despair,
For Christ hath in the charnel lain
To turn its sore disgrace to gain.
He will both grave and crown prepare ;
Who shed a Saviour's blood, will show a Saviour's care.

J. MORLEY PUNSHON.

Duty.**April 3.**

I TALKED with F. D. Maurice of the Duke of Wellington, in whom he considers the idea of Duty to be so strong and constant as to alone make him emphatically a great man.

CAROLINE FOX'S JOURNALS.

THOSE young people who are spoiled by an indulgent home, are spoiled, I think, not by over-happiness, but from having been encouraged in selfishness, never made to understand and led to practice Christian Duty.

SARA COLERIDGE.

A Night Watch.**April 4.**

THE dusty day is done,
The night begun ;
While prayerful watch I keep,
Sleep, love, sleep !
Is there no magic in the touch
Of fingers thou dost love so much ?
Fain would they scatter poppies o'er thee now ;
Or, with its mute caress,
The tremulous lip some soft nepenthe press
Upon thy weary lid and aching brow ;
While prayerful watch I keep :
Sleep, love, sleep !

EMILY JUDSON.

Sunday at Sea.**April 5.**

It is a blessed thing
In God's own courts to stand,
To hear the pealing anthem swell,
And join the prayerful band ;
Yet who in full dependence feels
That one alone can save,
Until his fleeting life he trusts
Unto the faithless wave ?

It is a blessed thing
To heed the Sabbath chime,
And on, 'neath summer foliage-walks
To keep the holy time :
Yet who hath all devoutly praised
Him who his life hath kept,
Until the strong, unpitying surge,
Raged round him while he slept ?

L. H. SIGOURNEY.

-The Christian's Calling.**April 6.**

A FAMOUS sect of antiquity summed up the rules of conduct in these two words : ' Bear and forbear.' A noble motto, the austere severity of which our conscience salutes in passing ; but how far is it surpassed by that of the Son of Man, which might be summed up in two other words : Sanctify and diffuse thyself !

FRANK COULIN, D.D.

Parting with Missionaries.**April 7.**

FRIENDS and home and all forsaking,
Lord ! they go at Thy command ;
As their stay Thy promise taking,
While they traverse sea and land :
O be with them !
Lead them safely by the hand !

When they reach the land of strangers,
And the prospect dark appears,
Nothing seen but toils and dangers,
Nothing felt but doubts and fears,
Be Thou with them !
Hear their sighs and count their tears.

THOMAS KELLY.

Guidance.**April 8.**

My Redeemer and my Lord !
I beseech Thee, I entreat Thee,
Guide me in each act and word,
That hereafter I may meet Thee,
Watching, waiting, hoping, yearning,
With my lamp well trimmed and burning.

If my feeble prayer can reach Thee,
O, my Saviour, I beseech Thee,
Even as Thou hast died for me,
More sincerely
Let me follow where Thou leadest.

LONGFELLOW.

Spring.

April 9.

THE blasts of winter drive the wingèd seeds
 Over the earth—next come the snows and rain,
 And frosts and storms which dreary Winter leads
 Out of his Scythian cave, a savage train ;
 Behold ! Spring sweeps over the world again !
 Shedding soft dews from her æthereal wings ;
 Flowers on the mountains, fruits over the plain,
 And music on the waves and woods she flings,
 And love on all that lives, and calm on lifeless things.

SHELLEY.

In Time of Difficulty.

April 10.

AND this very series of providence and care God expresses to all His sons by adoption ; and will ease our pains, and refresh our sorrows, and give quietness to our fears, and deliverance from our troubles, and sanctify it all, and give a crown at last, and all in His good time, if we wait the coming of the Angel, and in the meantime do our duty with care.

BP. JEREMY TAYLOR.

Rejoicing.**April 11.**

BE glad, O ye righteous, and rejoice in the Lord :
and be joyful, all ye that are true of heart.

Ps. xxxiii. 11.

THE fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.

Gal. v. 22.

REJOICE always ; pray without ceasing ; in every-
thing give thanks.

1 Thess. v. 17.

In Sickness (Sunday).**April 12.**

How many blessed groups this hour are wending,
Through England's primrose meadow-paths their
way,
Towards spire and tower 'neath shadowy elms
ascending,
Whence the sweet sounds proclaim the Sabbath-day ;
The halls from old heroic ages grey
Pour their fair children forth, and hamlets low,
With whose thick orchard-blooms the south winds
play,
Send forth their inmates in a happy flow
Like a freed vernal stream.—I may not tread
With them those pastures, to the feverish bed
Of sickness bound ; yet, O my God ! I bless
Thy mercy that with Sabbath peace hast filled
My chastened heart, and all its throbbings stilled,
To one deep calm of lowliest thankfulness.

MRS. HEMANS.

The Skylark.**April 13.**

Lo ! here the gentle lark, weary of rest,
From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,
And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast
The sun ariseth in his majesty ;
Who doth the world so gloriously behold,
The cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold.

SHAKSPEARE.

O Skylark, for thy wing !
Thou bird of joy and light,
That I might soar and sing
At heaven's empyreal height !
With the heathery hills beneath me,
Whence the streams in glory spring,
And the pearly clouds to wreath me,
O Skylark, on thy wing !

MRS. HEMANS.

In Trouble.**April 14.**

Oh, in the dark and stormy night,
When far from land I cry with fear,
Shine o'er the waves, thou holy Light !
Then, O my Saviour ! be Thou near.
Though from afar, let me but see
Dim through the dark, Thy gliding Form,
And bright the gloomy hour will be,
That brought Thy presence in the storm.

JAMES D. BURNS.

Self-Forgetting.**April 15.**

As I quietly sat at my daily work,
Gathering the threads that the night had sundered,
There seemed a spirit around to lurk
Other than mine : I mused and wondered.
I cheered the sad, I smiled with the gay,
I whispered the words of aid and kindness,
But the deeper soul was away, away,
And the inner eye had cast its blindness.

And oh, what a happy day was mine !
For the Christ-born joy of self-forgetting
Was poured in my heart like oil and wine,
Soothing its worldly toil and fretting ;
Yet when the work of the day was past,
And the fight with the outward world was over,
Sweet was the thought of home at last,
As the peaceful port to the tired sea-rover.

R. B. RUTTER.

In Prospect of Difficulty.**April 16.**

WE thank Thee, Lord !—when Thou hast need
The man aye ripens for the deed ;
And Thou canst make the timid bold
To shed his fears—as dross from gold—
And, nerved from Heaven, nor droop nor quail,
Though worlds confront and hell assail.
O breathe, in this, and every hour,
On each—on me—this soul of power !

J. MORLEY FUNSHON.

Seeing the Best in Men.**April 17.**

IT is very easy to fix our attention only on the weak points of those around us, to magnify them, to irritate them, to aggravate them; and, by so doing, we can make the burden of life unendurable, and can destroy our own and others' usefulness wherever we go. But this was not the new love wherewith we are to love one another. That love is universal, because in its spirit we overcome evil simply by doing good. We drive out error simply by telling the truth. We strive to look on both sides of the shield of truth. We strive to speak the truth in love. . . . with the determination cordially to love whatever is lovable even in those in whom we cordially detest whatever is detestable.

DEAN STANLEY.

In Trouble.**April 18.**

FOR us—whatever's undergone,
Thou knowest—willest—what is done :
Grief may be joy misunderstood ;
Only the Good discerns the good.
I trust Thee while the days go on.

I praise Thee while my days go on ;
I love Thee while my days go on :
Through dark and dearth, through fire and frost,
With emptied arms and treasure lost,
I thank Thee while my days go on.

E. B. BROWNING.

The Saviour.**April 19.**

I AM not skilled to understand
What God hath willed, what God hath planned;
I only know at His right hand
Stands one who is my Saviour.

And had there been in all this wide
Wide world no other soul beside,
But only mine, then He had died
That He might be its Saviour;

One wounded spirit, sore opprest,
One wearied soul that found no rest
Until it found it on the breast
Of Him who was its Saviour.

* * * *

Yea, living, dying, let me bring
My strength, my solace from this spring,
That He who lives to be my King
Once died to be my Saviour!

DORA GREENWELL.

The Dead.**April 20.**

BUT what awak'st thou in the heart, O Spring !
The human heart with all its dreams and sighs ?
Thou that giv'st back so many a buried thing,
Restorer of forgotten harmonies,
Fresh songs and scents break forth where'er thou art—
What wak'st thou in the heart ?

Looks of familiar love that never more,
Never on earth, our aching eyes shall meet ;
Past words of welcome to our household door,
And vanished smiles, and sounds of parted feet—
Spring ! midst the murmuring of thy flowering trees,
Why, why, reviv'st thou these ?

Vain longings for the Dead ! why come they back
With thy young birds, and leaves, and living blooms ?
Oh, is it not, that from thine earthly track
Hope, to thy world may look beyond the tombs ?
Yes, gentle Spring, no sorrow dims thine air,
Breathed by our loved ones *there* !

MRS HEMANS.

In Trouble.**April 21.**

GIVE sorrow words : the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break.

SHAKESPEARE.

I CRIED unto God with my voice, and He gave
ear unto me.

Ps. lxxvii. 1.

Christ our Light.**April 22.**

AWAKE, thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light. Eph. v. 14.

DARK and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by Thee ;
Joyless is the day's return
Till Thy mercy's beams I see ;
Till they inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart.

CHARLES WESLEY.

The Christian Life.**April 23.**

THE problem which Jesus proposes to human nature is endless aspiration steadied by endless peace ; a perfectly restful yet increasing effort after a good which is never to be attained till we attain a higher and more perfect form of existence. It is because this problem is insolvable by any human wisdom that He says that they who take His yoke upon them must learn of Him, for He alone can make the perfect yoke easy and its burden light.

H. B. STOWE.

Depression.

April 24.

AND for the rest, in weariness,
In disappointment or distress,
When strength decays or hope grows dim,
We ever may recur to Him
Who has the golden oil divine
Wherewith to feed our failing urns,
Who watches every lamp that burns
Before His sacred shrine.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

The Joy of God's Presence.

April 25.

FOR sometimes when I am busy among men,
With heart and brain an open thoroughfare
For faces, words, and thoughts other than mine,
And a pause comes at length—oh, sudden then,
Back throbs the tide with rush exultant rare ;
And for a gentle moment I divine
Thy dawning presence flush my tremulous air.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

APRIL 26, 27.

Spring.**April 26.**

I HEARD a thousand blended notes
 While in a grove I sat reclined,
 In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.
 Through primrose tufts in that sweet bower
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
 And 'tis my faith that every flower
 Enjoys the air it breathes.
 The birds around me hopped and played;
 Their thoughts I cannot measure:
 But the least motion that they made,
 It seemed a thrill of pleasure.
 The budding twigs spread out their fan,
 To catch the breezy air;
 And I must think, do all I can,
 That there was pleasure there.

WORDSWORTH.

Bearing Troubles Willingly.**April 27.**

As long as suffering seems grievous to thee, and
 thou seekest to fly from it, so long will it be ill with
 thee, and the tribulation from which thou fliest will
 everywhere follow thee. With good reason oughtest
 thou willingly to suffer a little for Christ, since many
 suffer greater things for the world.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

Happiness in Advancing Age.**April 28.**

How can we make a happy autumn time?
A cheerful winter? How shall we escape
A lone old age of brooding melancholy?
The only sure preparative for joy
At evening, is an Enoch-walk at noon,
And ever-deepening habit of the soul
To trust the love of God, the God of love.

R. B. RUTTER.

AT evening time it shall be light. Zech. xiv. 7.

The Lesson of Disappointment.**April 29.**

YET, when the Spring is in the land,
And bright the heavens o'erhead,
In sullen gloom ye will not stand,
Though life's best hopes be dead;
New leaves break forth from buds unseen,
Till all the wood is clothed in green.

Fair souls, that from your high intent
By bitter fate are barred,
Though past all hope your lives are bent,
And passed all feeling scarred,
Yet learn of these to do as they—
Not what ye would, but what ye may.

From the *Spectator*.

Prayer.**April 30.**

PRAYER is more than a kneeling and asking something from God—much more. It is more than expecting and claiming that which we ask. What we need is to get into the presence of God. We want the hallowing touch of God's own hand, and the light of His countenance. Tarrying in His presence we must have the breath of God breathed into us again, renewing the life which He created at the first. This is the first, the *great* need of the life of holiness, without which nothing can avail us anything.

MARK GUY PEARSE.

→* MAY. *←

Rejoicing.

May 1.

THE blue-bells are kissed by the breeze,
A troop of them dance in the vale,
And buttercups under the trees
Are all of them telling a tale ;
Oh, millions of other bright gems
Are leaping wherever I stray,
And warbling their eloquent hymn,
'Tis May! 'tis the beautiful May !'

JOHN HARRIS.

THUS the men
Whom Nature's works can charm, with God Himself
Hold converse ; grow familiar day by day
With His conceptions, act upon His plan,
And form to His the relish of their souls.

AKENSIDE.

The Discipline of Life.

May 2.

ONE's faith and reason must ever rise higher and higher as the duties and cares of life increase. It is the intention, I believe, of the Most High, that we should go through this discipline and be elevated in this way, and therefore I think that He lays on us heavier cares and higher duties. We are never let alone, and the end is blessed : though, no doubt, the way is sometimes rough. We have no means of overcoming but by faith, lying in the everlasting Arms. We cannot alter circumstances, and we must not be altered by them. We must be Christian fatalists, holding by the Divine Hand in light and darkness ; ever holding on, and safe, not by what we see, but by what we trust.

BISHOP EWING.

In Solitude.

May 3.

THERE's not a bird with lonely nest,
In pathless wood or mountain crest,
Nor meaner thing, which does not share,
O God ! in Thy paternal care.

Each barren crag, each desert rude,
Holds Thee within its solitude ;
And Thou dost bless the wanderer there
Who makes his solitary prayer.

BAPTIST W. NOEL.

Doubt.

May 4.

FOR all thy rankling doubts so sore
 Love thou thy Saviour still,
 Him for thy Lord and God adore,
 And ever do His will.
 Though vexing doubts may seem to last,
 Let not thy soul be quite o'ercast :—
 Soon will He show thee all His wounds and say,
 ' Long have I known thy name—know thou My face
 alway.'

KEBLE.

The Witness of Nature to God.

May 5.

THOU hast not left
 Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
 Of Thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and grace
 Are here to speak of Thee. This mighty oak—

* * * * *

. . . . not a prince
 E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
 Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
 Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
 Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
 Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
 With scented breath and look so like a smile,
 Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
 An emanation from the indwelling life,
 A visible token of the upholding love,
 That are the soul of this great universe.

W. C. BRYANT.

Anxiety.**May 6.**

ALL things here are changing—the phases of particular trials—the kind of trials, too—the apparent earthly grounds on which they are to be judged. But God is ever the same; and nothing can arise to which the knowledge of God cannot be successfully applied.

REV. P. B. POWER.

ACQUAINT thyself with God, and be at peace.

Job, xxii. 21.

To 'humble Men of Heart.'**May 7.**

O NOT from far—beneath—above,

We vainly quest Incarnate Love;

God all around we see:

Though banished into dreariest wild

The Father talketh with the child,

His holy place—the one lone desert-tree.

The stammered word, the slender praise,

The poor, the young, the friendless, raise,—

The homage long delayed,

He will not e'er reject with scorn,—

He who of old the wilding thorn

In Midian's waste His bright pavilion made.

W. MORLEY PUNSHON.

The Daisy.**May 8.**

SWEET flower ! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast ;

Sweet, silent creature,
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature. WORDSWORTH.

In Sickness.**May 9.**

WHEN languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away.

Sweet in the confidence of faith
To trust His firm decrees ;
Sweet to lie passive in His hands,
And know no will but His.

Sweet to rejoice in lively hope,
That when my change shall come,
Angels shall hover round my bed,
And waft my spirit home.

If such the views that grace unfolds,
Weak as it is below,
What rapture must the church above
In Jesus' presence know !

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

Recovery from Sickness.**May 10.**

I WHO have seen such visions bright,
When lying on my bed of pain,
How shall I still 'walk in the light'
When in this busy world again?
Oh, how can I my steps direct,
Unless Thou guide me, and protect?
Oh, as life's vigour shall return
Joy in its duties shall come back;
A holy light shall round me burn,
And light the erst too weary track;
Till all I love rejoice to see
What Thou, my God, hast done for me. C. S.

Heaven.**May 11.**

WHAT is the heaven our God bestows?
No prophet yet, no angel knows;
Was never yet created eye
Could see across Eternity;
Not seraph's wing for ever soaring
Can pass the flight of souls adoring,
That nearer still, and nearer grow
The unapproachèd Lord, once made for them so low.
KEBLE.

The Thankful Retrospect.

May 12.

THERE is hope, but nothing of fear,
Nought but a patient mind,
For him who waits with conscience clear
And soul resigned,
Whate'er the mystic coming change
Shall bring of new and strange.
He looks back once upon the fields of life,
The good and evil locked in strife,
The happy and the unhappy days,
The Right we always love, the oft-triumphant Wrong,
And all his being to a secret song
Sings with a mighty and unfaltering voice—
'I have been ; Thou hast done all things well ; I am
glad ; I give thanks ; I rejoice !

LEWIS MORRIS.

In Suffering.

May 13.

HAPPY are they that learn in Thee,
Though patient suffering teach,
The secret of enduring strength,
And praise too deep for speech—
Peace—that no pressure from without,
No strife within can reach.

On Thy compassion I repose,
In weakness and distress :
I will not ask for greater ease,
Lest I should love Thee less.
O 'tis a blessed thing for me
To need Thy tenderness. A. L. WARING.

Rejoicing.**May 14.**

IN our hearts fair Hope lay smiling,
Sweet as air and all beguiling :
And there hung a mist of blue-bells on the slope and
down the dell ;
And we talked of joy and splendour
That the years unborn would render,
And the blackbirds helped us with the story, for they
knew it well.

Joy companied with every cry,
Joy in their food, in that keen wind,
That heaving sea, that shaded sky,
And in themselves and in their kind.

JEAN INGELOW.

O YE holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord ;
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

SONG OF THE THREE CHILDREN.

' Our Ignorance in Asking.'**May 15.**

MAN is so hungry after happiness,
He cries so eagerly, ' Lord, favour me
With health, with comfort, with prosperity ;'
And God's great love yearns equally to bless :
But in His higher ways He none the less,
And in His higher counsels, it may be,
Grants in denying.

J. E. A. BROWN.

NOR let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny.

W. C. BRYANT.

True Love Unchanging.**May 16.**

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove :
O no ; it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

SHAKESPEARE.

A Dying Word.**May 17.**

LET me not die and not one word be said
To show contrition for the sins of life ;
To show it to my partners in the strife :
So root of bitterness, when I am dead,
Spring never up and grow to baleful head.
For though our peace with God have long been
made,
Though we have loved, and striven, and watched,
and prayed,
And Christ have been to us as hidden bread,
Yet, when o'erpressed by suffering and life's strain,
We quit our watch, and to temptation yield ;—
And these our errors may rise up again,
Though love might wish that they should lie con-
cealed.—
So give, dear Lord, a moment in my pain,
To say ' Forgive,' ere death my lips have sealed.

ANON.

Doctrine and Life.**May 18.**

It is easy to investigate doctrines, and to weigh evidences; and there is a delightful sense of intellectual vigour in detecting error, and exposing sophistry, and demonstrating the triumph of truth. It is comparatively easy also, and it is delightful to a regulated mind, to rise above the events of ordinary life, and to ascend, in exalted contemplation, to those higher regions, where shine forth in a peculiar manner the Divine perfections—to luxuriate amid the wonders of creation, the wonders of providence, and it may be also the mysteries of grace. But a more difficult exercise remains—and that is, to look within, and determinedly to press the question respecting our own moral condition, and how far we are under the influence of the truths which we profess to believe.

JOHN ABERCROMBIE.

Joy.**May 19.**

HEARK, how the birds do sing
And woods do ring !
All creatures have their joy, and man hath his.
Yet if we rightly measure,
Man's joy and pleasure
Rather hereafter, than in present is.
Not that he may not here
Taste of the cheer :
But as birds drink, and straight lift up their head,
So must he sip and think
Of better drink
He may attain to, after he is dead.

GEORGE HERBERT.

God in Nature.**May 20.**

YET Thou art working all around,
And bidding us behold
How everything that feels Thy power
Bursts into life with glorious dower
Of beauties manifold.

The delicate embroidery
That decks the lichen'd stone ;
The little fairy flowers that drink
The morning dews, and gaily blink,
Though seen by Heaven alone ;

The ceaseless hum of tiny wings
That fan the sultry air ;
The joyous thrills and echoings
Of leafy woods in early springs,
Proclaim Thy presence there.
J. E. B. (from *The Dove on the Cross*).

Rest.**May 21.**

WHAT is the true rest? Not idleness, but peace
of mind. To rest from sin, from sorrow, from fear,
from doubt, from care : that is the true rest, the rest
of God.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

Dependency in Spring.**May 22.**

'AND thus He clothes the earth through ages long !

Why art thou fretting o'er thy little *now*,
And fearing for the morrow? Rise, be strong !'

I whispered to my heart, while o'er my brow
Blew the fresh breezes from the distant sea :
' Be strong, and fear not, for He cares for thee ;
His love is warmth and sunshine, and can bring
To thee the brightness of returning spring ;
Give thee the robe of praise for earth's annoy,
Beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy.'

MATILDA STURGE.

The Discipline of Life.**May 23.**

O LET thy soul

Remember, what the will of Heaven ordains
Is ever good for all ; and if for all,
Then good for thee. Not only by the warmth
And soothing sunshine of delightful things
Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft misled
By that bland light, the young unpractised views
Of reason wander through a fatal road,
Far from their native aim : as if to lie
Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait
The soft access of ever-circling joys,
Were all the end of being.

AKENSIDE.

Church Bells.**May 24.**

DEAR bells! How sweet the sound of village bells,
When on the undulating air they swim!
Now loud as welcomes, faint now as farewells,
And trembling all about the breezy dells,
As fluttered by the wings of Cherubim.
Meanwhile the bees are chanting a low hymn;
And, lost to sight, th' ecstatic lark above
Sings, like a soul beatified, of love. T. HOOD.

After Affliction.**May 25.**

I CANNOT call affliction sweet,
'And yet 'twas good to bear;
Affliction brought me to Thy feet,
And I found comfort there.
My weary soul was all resigned
To Thy most gracious will;
Oh, had I kept that better mind,
Or been afflicted still!
Lord, grant me grace for every day,
Whate'er my state may be,
Through life, in death, with truth to say,
'My God is all to me!'

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

‘The Day of Small Things.’

May 26.

WE keep our patience for our greater cares,
And murmur unrepenting o’er the less,
Thinking to show our strength in our distress
His patience with our hourly fretfulness
Still gently bears.

We travel far to find Him, seeking still,
Often in weariness, to reach His shrine,
Ready our choicest treasures to resign :
He, in our daily homes, lays down the line,
‘Do here My will.’ J. E. A. BROWN.

Peace.

May 27.

‘PEACE I leave with you’ has always seemed to me nearly the most lovely and blessed sentence in the New Testament ; our Lord’s own word in the highest and fullest sense. That it should be *Peace* itself—not peace if our state of mind *is fit to receive it*, but the gift of the state of mind—is very divine. It seems Christ giving Himself (indeed it must be this) is our Peace.

F. D. MAURICE.

Rejoicing.**May 28.**

AND all the earth is gay ;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday.

Ye blessèd creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make ; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
O evil day ! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning
This sweet May morning.

WORDSWORTH.

LET every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.

Ps. cl. 6.

Trust for the Future.**May 29.**

THE blue skies smile and flowers bloom on,
And rivers still keep flowing—
The dear God still His rain and sun
On good and ill bestowing.
His pine-trees whisper, ' Trust and wait ;'
His flowers are prophesying,
That all we dread of change or fate
His love is underlying.

J. G. WHITTIER.

The Fear of Death.

May 30.

ART thou afraid of Death? Thou mistakest him :
thou thinkest him an enemy ; he is a friend : if his
visage be sour and hard, he is no other than the grim
porter of Paradise, which shall let thee into glory.
Like unto Peter's good angel he may smite thee on
the side, but he shall lead thee out of thy prison,
through the iron gates into the city of God.

BISHOP HALL.

The Country Parson.

May 31.

A GOOD man there was of religiön
That was a poorë Parson of a town :
But rich he was of holy thought and werk :
He also was a learned man, a clerk,
That Christë's gospel truly wouldë preach,
His parishens devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversity full patient.
Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder,
But he left not, for no rain nor thunder,
In sickness and in mischief to visit
The farthest in his parish, much and lit,*
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.
This noble ensample to his sheep he gaf,
That first he wrought and afterwards he taught,
Out of the gospel he the wordës he caught.

* Great and small.

CHAUCER.

→❖ JUNE. ❖←

Rejoicing.

June 1.

THE sun is careering in glory and might,
'Mid the deep blue sky and the cloudlets white ;
The bright wave is tossing its foam on high,
And the summer breezes go lightly by ;
The air and the water dance, glitter, and play,
And why should not I be as merry as they ?

The linnet is singing the wild wood through,
The fawn's bounding footsteps skim over the dew ;
The butterfly flits round the flowering tree,
And the cowslip and bluebell are bent by the bee ;
And the creatures that dwell in the forest are gay,
And why should not I be as merry as they ?

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Praise.

June 2.

I PRAISED the earth in beauty seen,
With garlands gay of various green ;
I praised the sea, whose ample field
Shone glorious as a silver shield.
And Earth and Ocean seemed to say,
' Our beauties are but for a day.'

O God ! O Good beyond compare !
If thus Thy meaner works are fair,
If thus Thy bounties gild the span
Of ruined earth and sinful man,
How glorious must the mansion be
Where Thy redeemed shall dwell with Thee !

BISHOP HEBER.

Advancing Years.**June 3.**

O SHAME upon thee, listless heart,
So sad a sigh to heave ;
As if thy Saviour had no part
In thoughts that make thee grieve.

As if along His lonesome way
He had not borne for thee
Sad languors through the summer day,
Storms on the wintry sea.

Then grudge not thou the anguish keen
That makes thee like thy Lord,
And learn to quit with eye serene
Thy youth's ideal hoard.

Thou shalt have joy in sadness soon—
The pure, calm joy be thine,
Which brightens, like the eastern moon,
As day's wild lights decline. KEBLE.

A Summer Dawn.**June 4.**

THE spirit of a glorious summer day
Broods o'er the landscape this sweet early morning ;
Deep is the solemn stillness : far away
The hills lie steeped in the blue mists' adorning.

And in the depths of trees the tender haze
Lies waiting for the heat ; the dewy slope
Sparkles with dew :—O blessed summer days,
That fill the soul with light, and love, and hope !
C. S.

Pleasure in Little Things.**June 5.**

THESE blessed passing pleasures !
We need not let them waste,
We need not leave their treasures
Behind us in our haste.
We need not doubt their fitness,
Where Earth's deep shadows fall ;
God giving, He is witness
That we shall want them all.

Amid the whole sad story
Of human shame and sin,
If He gives gleams of glory
We ought to let them in.
And oh, when brought before us,
Where heart and soul can see,
How mighty to restore us,
Love's little signs may be !

A. L. WARING.

Advancing Years.**June 6.**

O STREAM of life, whose swifter flow
Is of the end forewarning,
Methinks thy sundown afterglow
Seems less of night than morning.

The mystery of the untried days
I close my eyes from reading,
His will be done whose darkest ways
To light and life are leading.

J. G. WHITTIER.

God in Nature.**June 7.**

MORN, when before the sun his orb unshrouds,
Swift as a beacon-torch his light has sped,
Kindling the dusky summits of the clouds
Each to a fiery red ;—

The slanted columns of the noonday light,
Let down into the bosom of the hills,
Or sunset, that with golden vapour bright
The purple mountain fills ;—

These made him say,—If God has so arrayed
A fading world that quickly passes by,
Such rich provision of delight has made
For every human eye,

What shall the eyes that wait for Him survey,
Where His own presence gloriously appears
In worlds that were not founded for a day,
But for eternal years?

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

Hope.**June 8.**

THE radiant hope new-born,
Expands like rising morn
In my life's life : and as a ripening rose,
The crimson shadow of its glory throws
More vivid, hour by hour, on some pure stream ;
So from that hope are spreading
Rich hues, o'er nature shedding
Each day a clearer, spiritual gleam.

MRS. HEMANS.

**'D ye Fowls of Heaven, bless ye the Lord ;
praise Him and magnify Him for ever.'**

Song of the Three Children.

June 9.

OH, who that hears your chorus strong,
Cornet, and flute, and sackbut clear,
And psaltery both loud and long,
And dulcimer so soft to hear,
But must fall down in heart and worship Him,
And set His image up in grateful heart,
Who in this life, bewildering and dim,
Hath to His creatures given a potent part
Our hearts to raise,
And fill with praise,
And for a season bid all grovelling care depart ?
C. S.

Christ our Life.

June 10.

O LORD, I find that nothing else will do
But follow where Thou goest, sit at Thy feet,
And where I have Thee not, still run to meet.
Roses are scentless, hopeless are the morns,
Rest is but weakness, laughter crackling thorns,
If Thou, the Truth, do not make them the true :
Thou art my life, O Christ ! and nothing else will do.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

Divine Guidance.

June 11.

WHERE shall wisdom be found?

Job, xxviii. 12.

If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting.

James, i. 5.

I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye.

Ps. xxxii. 8.

'I will bless the Lord at all times.'

Ps. xxxiv.

June 12.

For what shall I praise Thee, my God and my King?
For what blessings the tribute of gratitude bring?
Shall I praise Thee for plenty, for health, and for ease,
For the spring of delight and the sunshine of peace?

For all this should I praise Thee, and *only* for this,
I should leave half unsung Thy donation of bliss:
I praise Thee for sorrow, for sickness, for care;
For the thorns I have gathered, the anguish I bear.

For my nights of anxiety, watching, and tears,
A present of pain, a perspective of fears:
I praise Thee, I bless Thee, my King and my God,
For the good and the evil Thy hand has bestowed.

CAROLINE FRY.

Prayer in Perplexity.**June 13.**

IN nothing be anxious ; but in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Philip. iv. 6, 7.

I am well persuaded that after earnest prayer the mind is clearest, and the will is freest, and the judgment is wisest, and that then thoughts come to us most nearly like Divine messages. And after kneeling to God, our first few steps are almost certainly in the way of eternal life.

ANON.

Spiritual Discouragement.**June 14.**

I AM cast out—I find no place,
No hearing at the throne of grace.
'Come, Lord—O come !' I cry alway,
I pour my heart out night and day,
Yet never, until now, have won
The answer—'Here am I, my son.'

O dull of heart ! enclosed doth lie
In each 'Come Lord,' a 'Here am I.'
Thy love, thy longing are not thine,
Reflections of a love divine :
The very prayer to thee was given,
Itself a messenger from heaven.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

Absence.

June 15.

WHERE'ER I look, where'er stray,
Thy thought goes with me on my way,
And hence the prayer I breathe to-day.

If then a fervent wish for thee
The gracious heavens will heed from me,
What should, dear heart, its burden be?

God's love—unchanging, pure, and true—
The Paraclete white-shining through,
His peace; the fall of Hermon's dew.

With such a prayer on this sweet day,
As thou may'st hear, and I may say,
I greet thee, dearest, far away.

J. G. WHITTIER.

Trust.

June 16.

THE bird sits singing by his nest,
And tells aloud
His trust in God, and so is blest
'Neath every cloud.
He has no store, he sows no seed;
Yet sings aloud, and doth not heed;
By flowing stream or grassy mead
He sings to shame
Men, who forget, in fear of need,
A Father's Name.

ISAAC WILLIAMS.

The truly Great Man.**June 17.**

OBSERVE the calmness of great men ; noting by the way that real *greatness* belongs to no station and no set of circumstances. This calmness is the cause of their beautiful behaviour. Vanity, injustice, intemperance, are all smallnesses arising from a blindness to proportion in the vain, the unjust, the intemperate. Whereas no one thing, unless it be the love of God, has such a continuous hold on a great mind as to seem all in all to it. The great know, unconsciously, more of the real beneficent secret of the world : there is occasional repose of soul for them. How can such men be subdued by money, be enclosed by the ideas of a party or a faction, be so shut up in a profession, an art, or a calling, as to see nought else, or to believe only in one form of expression for what is beautiful and good ?

ARTHUR HELPS.

The Christian Character.**June 18.**

THERE is a sweet savour and influence which goes forth from a genuine Christian character, which wins, fascinates, and gains disciples for Christ, more than any preachings or any outward work we can do.

REV. JOHN CONGREVE.

The Peace of Self.

June 19.

How beautiful within our souls to keep
 This treasure the All-merciful hath given !
 To feel when we awake and when we sleep,
 Its incense round us like a breath from heaven.
 Quiet at heart and home,
 Where the heart's joys begin ;
 Quiet where'er we roam,
 Quiet around, within.

ANON.

Seeking Health.

June 20.

HEALTH ! I seek thee ; dost thou love
 The mountain top or quiet vale,
 Or deign o'er humbler hills to rove
 On showery June's dark south-west gale ?
 If so, I'll meet all blasts that blow,
 With silent step, but not forlorn ;
 Though, goddess, at thy shrine I bow,
 And woo thee each returning morn.

I seek thee where with all his might
 The joyous bird his rapture tells,
 Amidst the half-excluded light
 That gilds the foxglove's pendent bells ;
 Where cheerly up the bold hill-side
 The deepening groves triumphant climb ;
 In groves Delight and Peace abide,
 And Wisdom marks the lapse of time.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

The Remedy for Sorrows.**June 21.**

SHE knelt
And prayed with many tears to Him whose hand
Touches the wounded heart and it is healed.
With prayer there came new thoughts, and new desires.
She asked for patience, and a deeper love
For those with whom her lot was henceforth cast,
And that in acts of mercy she might lose
The sense of her own sorrow. When she rose,
A weight was lifted off her heart. She sought
Her couch, and slept a long and peaceful sleep.
At morn she woke to a new life. Her days
Henceforth were given to higher tasks of good
In the great world.

W. C. BRYANT.

WITH us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage are with Thee.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

Difficulty in Prospect.**June 22.**

'Do not meet trouble half way,' is good advice when it is trouble which may never come; but when you are sure that a time of trial and difficulty is before you, go out to meet it. And do not go alone if it concerns others as well as yourself. Calmly talk it over, discuss how it can be best met and overcome, face the worst. Then will all meet it in the same spirit, and where 'the best-laid schemes' fail there will be no heart-burnings, no mutual recriminations. Above all, pray for guidance and the power to endure.

C. S.

COMMIT thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.

Prov. xvi. 3.

The Privileges of Middle Life.**June 23.**

THE middle-aged, who have lived through their strongest emotions, but are yet in the time when memory is still half-passionate, and not merely contemplative, should surely be a sort of natural priesthood, whom life has disciplined and consecrated to be the refuge and rescue of early stumblers and victims of self-despair.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Rest in a Busy Life.**June 24.**

Busy footsteps coming, going,
Calls so varied to obey,
Never-ceasing sound and motion
Going on from day to day ;
Till at times the brain grows dizzy
With the constant whirl and strife,
And I long and plead for stillness—
Even one moment's hush in life.

Softly steals the Master's answer,
With the peace it ever brings,
'Thou canst find the wished-for quiet
In the shadow of my wings ;
Hiding there from earthly turmoil,
Safe and blest beneath their shade,
Hearing e'en my faintest whisper
Through the silence I have made.'

E. M. B.

Rest in God.

June 25.

To Him, from wanderings long and wild,
I come, an over-wearied child,
In cool and shade His peace to find
Like dew-fall settling on my mind.

J. G. WHITTIER.

COME unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy
laden, and I will give you rest.

Matt. xi. 28.

The 'Light of the World.'

June 26.

ANY one who has watched a sunrise among mountains will know how the light opens out depths of beauty and life when but lately the eye rested on a cold monotony of gloom or mist. At one moment, only the sharp, dark outline of the distant ranges stands out against the rosy sky, and at the next, peak after peak catches the living fire, which then creeps slowly down their rocky slopes, and woods and streams and meadows and homesteads start out from the dull shadows, and the grass on which we stand sparkles with a thousand dewdrops. Now all this represents in a figure what is the effect of the presence of Christ in the world, when the eye is opened to see Him. Let the thought of Christ rest on anything about us, great or small, and it will forthwith reflect on the awakened soul some new image of His power and love.

REV. B. F. WESTCOTT, D.D.



→* JULY. *←

The Love of Nature.

July 1.

I WOULD not for a world of gold
That Nature's lovely face should tire ;
Fountain of blessings yet untold !
Pure source of intellectual fire !
Fancy's fair buds, the germs of song,
Unquickened midst the world's rude strife.
Shall sweet retirement render strong,
And morning silence bring to life.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

Despondency.

July 2.

STATES of despondency do not last ; perhaps in speaking of them they depart. Despondency is hardly a state of mind, it is the mind's forgetfulness of its own true state : which is a glorious state, as I need not tell you. But I need to tell you too, as you need to tell me the same, for this forgetfulness is a plague that is always nigh at hand, and merely to hear another saying, 'It is not so as it seems ; the firmament is not a congregation of vapours, but has a goodly sun in the midst of it, and overhangs a beautiful earth,' is not merely comfortable, it is positively healing.

F. D. MAURICE.

Prayer in Joy and Grief.**July 3.**

AH! when the infinite burden of life descendeth
 upon us,
 Crushes to earth our hope, and under the earth, in
 the grave-yard,
 Then it is good to pray unto God for His sorrowing
 children.
 Turns He ne'er from His door, but He heals, and
 helps, and consoles them.
 Yet it is better to pray when all things are prosperous
 with us,
 Pray in fortunate days, for life's most beautiful Fortune
 Kneels down before the Eternal's throne and with
 hands inter-folded
 Praises, thankful and moved the only Giver of
 blessings.

LONGFELLOW.

Self-Estimate.**July 4.**

BE good and true, and you cannot be—in reality, or
 in the truth of things—commonplace or insignificant.
 Each of us is exactly as great as he is in God's sight,
 and no greater.

The Psalmist deeply felt that truth when he wrote,
 'I am small and of no reputation, yet'—and oh what
 a fire of conviction, what a burst of triumph, what a
 rush of hope, is compressed into that 'yet!'—'I am
 small and of no reputation; yet, have I kept Thy law.'

ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

CHRIST is all, and in all.

Col. iii. 11.

Sunday Morning.**July 5.**

O SIMPLY open wide the Temple door,
And let the solemn, swelling-organ greet,
 With voluntaries meet,
The willing advent of the rich and poor !
And while to God the loud Hosannas soar,
With rich vibrations from the vocal throng—
From quiet shades that to the woods belong,
 And brooks with music of their own,
Voices may come to swell the choral song
With notes of praise they learned in musings lone.

T. HOOD.

'The Joy of the Lord is your Strength.'**July 6.**

SOMETIMES a light surprises
The Christian while he sings ;
It is the Lord, who rises
With healing in His wings :
When comforts are declining
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain.

Set free from present sorrow,
We cheerfully can say,
E'en let the unknown to-morrow
Bring with it what it may.
It can bring with it nothing
But He will bear us through ;
Who gives the lilies clothing
Will clothe His people too.

COWPER.

The Lake of Geneva.

July 7.

I HAVE felt

A Presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean, and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
 A motion and a spirit that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows, and the woods,
 And mountains.

WORDSWORTH.

Music.

July 8.

THE spirit clings

So fondly to the sunshine of an hour,
 Forgetting oft its higher aims,—the things
 It should be seeking—does not own their power.
 Then doth sweet Music with a sudden strain,
 Like a swift breeze across a slumbering sea,
 Speak of a race to run, a prize to gain,
 The destinies of Immortality.

MARTINA STREET.

Hymn of Praise.

July 9.

JOIN voices, all ye living souls : ye birds,
That singing up to Heaven-gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes His praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill, or valley, fountain or fresh shade,
Made vocal by my song, and taught His praise.
Hail, Universal Lord ! be bounteous still
To give us only good ; and if the night
Have gathered aught of evil or concealed,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark !

MILTON.

Duty.

July 10.

ASK yourself, what do you care most for ? For success ? for enjoyment ? for ease ? Then success, or enjoyment, or ease, is your religion, by whatever name you call yourself. Or, if you care for nothing, then you have no religion at all. But if you care for duty, and place that first, then you are beginning aright, and where Christ would have you begin. I might tell you of the increasing happiness of such a life, of the interest, the largeness, the ever-growing, ever-widening and deepening sympathies of such a life. And I might tell you, too, how those who begin with a life of duty alone find themselves irresistibly drawn to the highest Example of duty ; how with faith unformulated they come at last, as it were with magnetic attraction, to Christ ; and they know that it is He who has been leading them all the time by ways that they knew not.

REV. J. M. WILSON.

Times of Exaltation.**July 11.**

WHY after such a solemn mood
Should any meaner thought intrude?
Why will not Heaven hereafter give
That we for evermore may live
Thus at our spirit's topmost bent?—
So asked I in my discontent.
But give me, Lord, a wiser heart ;
These seasons come and they depart.
These seasons, and those higher still
When we are given to have our fill
Of strength, and life, and joy with Thee,
And brightness of Thy face to see.

* * * *

Thrice welcome may such seasons be,
But welcome too the common way,
The lowly duties of the day,
And all which makes and keeps us low,
And teaches us ourselves to know.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

A Country Church.

July 12.

YES, when amidst the grove of green
The church's snow-white spire is seen,
The portal and the step of stone,
The walls to adoration known,
How holy, how dear, does the spot appear !
The fairest of heaven and earth are here.
Sorrow will cause the heart to pray ;
 But oh, how lovelier is the sound,
 When notes of happiness rebound,
 Where all is beautiful around
 Amidst the summer ray !

JAMES EDMESTON.

Prayer.

July 13.

OF what an easie quick accesse,
My blessed Lord, art Thou ! how suddenly
May our requests Thine ear invade !
To show that state dislikes not easinesse,
If I but lift mine eyes my suit is made :
Thou canst no more not heare, than Thou canst die.

GEORGE HERBERT.

PRAYER is the breathing of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Trust in God in Affliction.**July 14.**

It is common to speak of trust in God in seasons of anxiety and distress, as if we might trust that the dreaded evil would not be allowed to come upon us. But a very little experience renders this kind of trust impossible. Often, indeed, the fears of an anxious, apprehensive mind, are not realised ; but sometimes the dreaded stroke does fall, the thing that seemed almost too bad to be true does come to pass. And then, in the next anxiety that comes upon us, how can the heart help fearing that the worst may happen again ? Yet there is a trust of a different kind. It is more like a childlike looking up to our Father in Heaven, a leaning on His arm in our *present* need, and a trust that that arm will not fail us in a future into which we will not seek too anxiously to inquire. Such a trust as that need never fail us : experience would strengthen instead of weaken it ; and its effort would be as different as possible from the over-confidence of the naturally sanguine.

MATILDA STURGE.

GIVING.

July 15.

LARGELY thou givest, gracious Lord ;
Largely Thy gifts should be restored ;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is, 'Freely give.'

He only who forgets to hoard
Has learned to live.

KEBLE.

A MAN that is in want you shall treat as a suffering brother, and not relieve as a beggar, else your own soul shall be beggared of delicacy.

WILLIAM MOUNTFORD.

The Presence of God in Nature.

July 16.

IN the deep stillness and softness of all around us, in the incomparable splendour of the evening, there was something that seemed to bring us into the immediate presence of God. The wood was all our own ; no bird sang from out the thicket ; the broad river was so shallow as to be almost silent ; even a flower, I thought, would have broken the utterly sylvan charm, and not one bloomed beside our path. It was a world of green silence and of golden sunlight—sunlight trickling through the thick leaves, glittering upon the river, gleaming on the crags above us, while the trees stood forth in clear rounded masses, robed, not in the dark gloom of summer, but in hues which even in July were warm and burnished, as if the woods had ripened along with the corn.

DORA GREENWELL.

Confidence in God.**July 17.**

WE must so settle ourselves in a firm belief in the goodness of the government of God, that when the evil days come we may be able from the heart to say, 'Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight.'

BISHOP EWING.

SHALL we fear what God is about to do? There is nothing in the universe that I am afraid of, but that I shall not know and do all my duty.

MARY LYON.

Redeeming the Time.**July 18.**

HERE is there dawning
Another blue day,
Think—wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Out of Eternity
This new day was born :
Into Eternity
At night will return.

Behold it aforetime
No eye ever did ;
And soon it for ever
From all sight is hid.

Here is there dawning
Another blue day !
Think—wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

THOMAS CARLYLE.

**'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day,
and for ever.'**

July 19.

BUT whatever may be transitory we may be sure of this : that which is, and which alone is of the essence of Christianity, the Word, the Work, the Person of Christ—this will not pass away. These have their everlasting witness in the very constitution of humanity, a fresh witness in every fresh heart : and as the ages roll on and mankind subsists, they will only appreciate more, and more affectionately adore, such brightness of the Father's glory, and so express an Image of His Person.

REV. F. MYERS.

Wakefulness.

July 20.

HUSH, active mind ! now cease to think,
And let me hover on the brink
Of slumber, till I close my eyes
In sleep ; then wake with sweet surprise,
To find how fresh, oblivion deep
Hath made the mind, in precious sleep.

Still now thy cares, thou restless heart,
Thou dost o'erdo thy proper part.
Who is it saith, ' Cast care on Me,
Nor for the morrow anxious be ;
Sufficient unto every day
Is each day's evil ? ' Only pray
To Him who doth His people keep,
And gives His blessing while they sleep.

C.S.

Murmurings.

July 21.

BUT hush, my soul, and, vain regrets, be still ;
 Find rest in Him who is the complement
 Of whatsoe'er transcends your mortal doom,
 Of broken hope and frustrated intent ;
 In the clear vision and aspect of whom
 All wishes and all longings are fulfilled.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

The Mill.

July 22.

BLAME not the times in which we live,
 Nor Fortune, frail and fugitive ;
 Blame not thy parents, nor the rule
 Of vice or wrong once learned at school :—
 But blame thyself, O man !

* * * *

And self to take or leave is free,
 Feeling its own sufficiency ;
 In spite of science, spite of fate,
 The judge within thee, soon or late,
 Will blame but thee, O man !

Say not, 'I would, but could not ; He
 Should bear the blame who fashioned me.
 Call you mere change of motive, choice ?'
 Scorning such pleas, the inner voice,
 Cries, 'Thine the deed, O man !'

J. A. SYMONDS.

The Attitude of the Soul.

July 23.

WHILE I believe the principle of love to Christ is entrenched in the depths of my soul, the emotion of love is not always in that full play I want it to be. No doubt He judges us by the principle He sees to exist in us, but we can't help judging ourselves, in spite of ourselves, by our feelings.

* * * *

We must get our light directly from on high. At the same time we influence each other for right or for wrong; and one who is thoroughly upright and true will, unconsciously, influence and help those about him.

E. PRENTISS.

Immortality.

July 24.

DID I not speak of rivers, flowers, and flocks?
Begone, begone, with tame comparisons.
The free soul mocks the grasp of simile,
And bursts away to stand apart, alone,
More inaccessible than any star.
But bid her now to question of herself,
And she will answer boldly—yea—I am,
And *shall be* through the widening worlds beyond;
And in the buried seed of this small life
My boundless future lies, a pliant germ.

F. A. PRIDEAUX.

Sleep.**July 25.**

MAKER of all ! the Lord
And Ruler of the height,
Who, robing day in light, hast poured
Soft slumbers o'er the night ;
That to our limbs the power
Of toil may be renewed,
And hearts be raised that sink and cower,
And sorrows be subdued.

ST. AMBROSE.

Progress in the Christian Life.**July 26.**

It is the work of a long life to become a Christian. Many, oh ! many a time are we tempted to say, 'I make no progress at all : it is only failure after failure, nothing grows !' Now look at the sea when the flood is coming in. Go and stand by the sea-beach, and you will think that the ceaseless flux and reflux is but retrogression equal to the advance. But look again in an hour's time, and the whole ocean has advanced. Every advance has been beyond the last ; and every retrograde movement has been an imperceptible trifle less than the last. And this is Christian Progress. Many a fluctuation, many a backward motion, with a rush sometimes so vehement that all seems lost : but if the eternal work be real, every failure has been a real gain, and the next does not carry us so far back as we were before. . . . We are nearer to God than we were. The flood of spirit-life has carried us up higher on the everlasting shores, where the waves of life beat no more, and all is safe at last.

F. W. ROBERTSON.

Absent Friends.

July 27.

O LORD, for those most dear and far away,
But nearer and still dearer unto Thee,
Supply Thou more than I would dare to pray,
And when I cannot watch, watch Thou for me.

Stand by, where my strength could not have availed,
And in Thy might command the victory ;
Give comfort where my comfort would have failed ;
So great in love and power, Lord ! watch for me.

H. R. R.

Death Welcome.

July 28.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm where earth shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

F. W. BRYANT.

The Death of a Sister.

July 29.

DEATH was full urgent with thee, sister dear,
And startling in his speed ;
Brief pain, then languor till thy end came near ;—
Such was the path decreed,
The hurried road,
To lead thy soul from earth to thine own God's abode.

Death wrought in mystery ;— both complaint and
cure
To human skill unknown :—
God put aside all means to make us sure
It was His deed alone ;
Lest we should lay
Reproach on our poor selves that thou wast caught
away.

Death came unheralded—but it was well ;
For so the Saviour bore
Kind witness thou wast meet at once to dwell
On the eternal shore ;
All warning spared,
For none He gives where hearts are for prompt change
prepared.

J. H. NEWMAN.

The Departed Spirit.

July 30.

SPEAK then, thou voice of God within,
Thou of the deep, low, tone ;
Answer me, midst life's ceaseless din,
Where is the spirit flown ?

And the voice answered, ' Be thou still,
Enough to know is given,
Clouds, winds, and stars their part fulfil,
Thine is to trust in Heaven.'

MRS. HEMANS.

Trust in God.

July 31.

I LONG for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long ;
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And He can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath,
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised seed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

J. G. WHITTIER.

→✱ AUGUST. ✱←

Lift up your hearts.

August 1.

LOOK not downwards, but upwards—*Sursum Corda*—Lift up your hearts. Let this be your motto. May our response to-day and every day be the same—‘We lift them up unto the Lord.’ Lift them up to gaze on that wondrous and perfect character of the God-man in Christ Jesus, and that sight is a power which lasts for ever.

REV. J. M. WILSON.

Beloved ones departed.

August 2.

AND if ye wake or sleep,
Or wrapt yet conscious in a calm between
That stealeth not on earth, ye lie serene,
Doth matter little—solemn, sweet, and deep
Must be your rest with Him whose eyelids keep
Their watch above, for He can bless in sleep
His own beloved ones.

But is there prayer
Within your quiet homes, and is there care
For those ye leave behind? I would address
My spirit to this theme in humbleness:
No tongue or pen hath uttered or made known
This mystery, and thus I do but guess
At clearer types through lowlier patterns shown;
Yet when did Love on earth forsake its own?

DORA GREENWELL.

Help on the Way.**August 3.**

MUCH have we to support us in our strife,
With things which else would crush us, nor alone
Secret refreshings of the *inward* life,
But many a flower of sweetest scent is thrown
Upon our *outward* and our open way ;
None sweeter than at some seasons known
To them that dwell for many a prosperous day
Under one roof, and have, as they would hope,
One purpose for their lives, one aim, one scope,—
To labour upward on the path to heaven.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

True Enthusiasm.**August 4.**

A MAN who believes in God must have some enthusiasm for Him, and in His service, or he has no vital heat. This enthusiasm is not excitement. It is not a flame quickly lighted, which burns fiercely for a time, and then flickers and dies out. It need not, and if true it will not, lead us beyond the bounds of moderation, calmness, and common-sense. Like true love, of which it is a form, enthusiasm is deep, and silent, and self-restrained, and spends itself in glorifying the object which enkindles it. And without it there is no vital heat ; the spirit grows cold ; religion is a mere profession and form—the shroud of the soul which *lies dead in its coldness.*

REV. J. CONGREVE.

A Summer Morning by the Sea.**August 5.**

THERE was not on that day a speck to stain
The azure heaven ; the blessed sun alone,
In unapproachable divinity,
Careered, rejoicing in the fields of light.
How beautiful, beneath the bright blue sky
The billows' heave ! one glowing green expanse
Save where, along the line of bending shore,
Such line is thrown, as when the peacock's neck
Assumes its proudest tint of amethyst,
Embathed in emerald glory ; all the flocks
Of ocean are abroad ; like floating foam
The sea-gulls rise and fall upon the waves ;
With long protruded neck the cormorants
Wing their far flight aloft, and round and round
The plovers wheel, and give their note of joy.

SOUTHEY.**In Weakness.****August 6.**

O POWER to do ! O baffled will !
O prayer and action ! ye are one—
Who may not strive, may yet fulfil
The harder task of standing still,
And good but wished, with God is done.

J. G. WHITTIER.THEY also serve, who only stand and wait.MILTON.

Even Prayer

August 11

THE prayers I make will then be sweet indeed,
If Thou the Spirit give by which I pray :
My massetered heart is barren then,
That if its native self can nothing feed :
Oh God, and pious works Thou art the seed,
That quickens only when Thou say'st it may.
Unless Thou show us Thine own true way,
No man can find it—Father ! Thou must lead.
Do Thou then breathe those thoughts into my
mind
By which such virtue may in me be bred,
That in Thy holy footsteps I may tread :
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,
That I may have the power to sing of Thee,
And sound Thy praises everlastingly.

WORDSWORTH.

The New Commandment.

August 12.

WHAT might be done if men were wise,
What glorious deeds, my suffering brother,
Would they unite
In love and right,
And cease their scorn of one another ?
What might be done ? This might be done,
And more than this, my suffering brother—
More than the tongue
E'er said or sung,
If men were wise, and loved each other.

CHARLES MACKAY.

The Duty of Being Happy.

August 9.

THERE is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or, when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor. A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of good-will; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted.

R. L. STEVENSON.

For a Nurse.

August 10.

SHALL I silence keep

Of you, O ministering women fair,
Who, while the world lies sunk in careless sleep,
Still for the love of God and man, can bear
To watch by alien sick-beds, and to guard
With little hope and scant reward,
Midst misery, and foul infected air,
The friendless and the dying? Shall I dare
To sing of labour's meed, nor hold you dear?
Dear souls, your joys are great, and yet not wholly
here :

In heaven they blossom best and grow complete,
And beautiful upon the eternal mountains are your
feet.

LEWIS MORRIS.

Peace.**August 15.**

PEACE is an inward resting. A mind at peace is a mind not only calm and unmixed in its temporary mood, but profoundly composed in its unseen depths. It is an inward reality—quiet *within* the soul—a restful life beneath all other life—that Christ gives to them that are His. It is something deeper than sense, or intellect, or passion, or all the shows of that life which we can see, or hear, or touch:—it is a positive spiritual endowment—a *gift* from the Divine. It is the consciousness of God Himself as our loving Father, and of the strength of the Divine Will which we have chosen against all human selfishness and sin.

PRINCIPAL TULLOCH.

Patience under our Afflictions.**August 16.**

LET us be patient ! these severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes Celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

* * * *

And though at times, impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest.

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay ;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing
The grief that must have way. LONGFELLOW.

Meditation in the Country.**August 17.**

IF Thought might choose retirement, it should be
In the recesses of a summer wood,
Beneath an old and patriarchal tree,
Whose noble trunk the flood of ages stood ;
Beside a bank with forest blossoms strewed ;
And where a still and shadowed water sleeps,
And where in unrestrained and gamesome mood
The wild bird warbles, and the wild deer leaps.
In such an oriel things might wander by
Of sweet, sublime, and lovely fantasy.

JAMES EDMESTON.

Praise for Deliberance.**August 18.**

KING of glory, King of peace
I will love Thee ;
And that love may never cease
I will move Thee.
Thou hast granted my request,
Thou hast heard me ;
Thou didst note my working breast,
Thou hast spared me.
Wherefore with my utmost art,
I will sing Thee ;
And the cream of all my heart
I will bring Thee.

GEORGE HERBERT.

Death.**August 19.**

WEEP not for death !
'Tis but a fever stilled,
A pain supprest, a fear at rest,
A solemn hope fulfilled ;
The moonsheen on the slumbering deep
Is scarcely calmer—wherefore weep ?

Weep not for death !
The fount of tears is sealed :
Who knows how bright the inward light
To those closed eyes revealed ?
Who knows what fearless love may fill
The heart that seems so cold and still ?

ANON.

An Uncongenial Lot.**August 20.**

'It is no difficulty to me that so many people are placed in circumstances for which they are not fitted. I have felt all my life that I was in circumstances for which I was not fitted, and I see that this is necessary. Education would stop if we and our circumstances were fitted to each other. Failure is no difficulty to me ; or rather there can be no failure ; for the purpose of God is the training of the spirit, and this cannot fail.

T. ERSKINE.

The Peace of God.

August 21.

NOT only tongues of the apostles teach
Lessons of love and light, but these expanding
And sheltering boughs with all their leaves implore,
And say in language clear as human speech,
'The peace of God, that passeth understanding,
Be and abide with you for evermore !'

LONGFELLOW.

Separation.

August 22.

'YET why be sad ? for Thou wilt keep
Watch o'er them day by day :
Since Thou wilt soothe them when they weep,
And hear us when we pray.'

And this is just the prose fact of the case, full of real substantial comfort, in all the changes and chances of this mortal life. And another prose fact, which is often voted poetical, seems to me to be, that we are really nearer together in spirit when separated in body, as the thoughts and sympathies are perfectly independent of geography, and they naturally fly off on their own errands when a little anxiety is added to our love.

CAROLINE FOX.

Middle Age.**August 23.**

I MISS the unbounded hope of old,
The freshness and the glow of youth ;
I miss the fever and the fret,
The luminous haze of gold.
I see a mind clearer and calmer yet,
A more unselfish love, a more unclouded truth ;
Such gain I take, and this
More gracious shows, and fair, than that I miss.

LEWIS MORRIS.

By the Sea.**August 24.**

GOOD-BYE to pain and care ! I take
Mine ease to-day :
Here where these sunny waters break,
And ripples the keen breeze, I shake
All burdens from the heart, all weary thoughts away.
I draw a freer breath, I seem
Like all I see—
Waves in the sun—the white-winged gleam
Of sea-birds in the slanting beam,
And far-off sails that flit before the south wind free.
So when life's veil shall fall asunder,
The soul may know
No fearful change nor sudden wonder,
Nor sink the weight of mystery under,
But with the upward rise, and with the vastness grow.

J. G. WHITTIER.

A Brook by the Way.**August 25.**

We climbed a rugged mountain in the glare
Of summer noon ; the way beneath our feet
Toilsome and steep, while with untempered heat
The sun beat downward through the sultry air.
We rested on the slope, reclining where
'Twas green with moss, when lo ! up-bubbling near
A spring of purest water, cool and clear,
And to our fevered lips how welcome there !—
We climb the steep of life, how oft distressed
With the rough track beneath the scorching ray,
Yet often finding, when the most oppressed,
A spring of living water by the way,
To cheer us fainting, and our trust restore.
In Him who leads us where He trod before.

MATILDA STURGE.

Duty.**August 26.**

AND what comes of obedience to the law of Duty?
There comes of it all that is best, all that is greatest,
in this world's history. Duty has been the mainspring
of every god-like action, the polestar of every holy life.
We may train ourselves—aye, and that daily—to do
things, unknown indeed, and unnoticed, but as great in
essence, and as dear in the sight of God, as these [high
actions which men admire]. For it is on our lives, and
not on this or that act, that God will look. If our life
be guided by these principles, it is impossible that we
should live in vain. 'If the home duties,' said Con-
fucius, 'are well performed, what need is there to go
as far for sacrifice ?'

ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

Adversity.**August 27.**

PROSPERITY is the blessing of the Old Testament ; Adversity is the blessing of the New ; which carrieth the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favour. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harpe, you shall heare as many herselike ayres as carols : and the pencill of the Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Salomon. Prosperity is not without many feares and distastes ; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. LORD BACON.

Hope.**August 28.**

THEREFORE my Hope arose
From out her swoond, and gazed upon Thy face,
And, meeting there that soft subduing look,
Which Peter's spirit shook,
Sunk downward in a rapture to embrace
Thy piercèd hands and feet with kisses close,
And prayed Thee to assist her evermore
To 'reach the things before.'

Then gavest Thou the smile
Whence angel-wings thrill quick like summer
lightning,
Vouchsafing rest beside Thee, where she never
From love and Faith may sever.

E. B. BROWNING.

Bereavement.**August 29.**

WHAT shall make trouble? not the holy thought
Of the departed—that shall be a part
Of the undying things that peace hath wrought
Into a world of beauty in the heart.
Not the forms passed away
That life's strong current bore;
Though the stream might not stay,
The ocean shall restore.

ANON.

Anniversaries.**August 30.**

THE holiest of all holy-days are those
Kept by ourselves in silence and apart;
The secret anniversaries of the heart
When the full river of feeling overflows:—
The happy days unclouded to their close;
The sudden joys that out of darkness start
As flames from ashes; swift desires that dart
Like swallows singing down each wind that blows!
White as the gleam of a receding sail,
White as a cloud that floats and fades in air,
White as the whitest lily on a stream,
These tender memories are; a fairy tale
Of some enchanted land we know not where,
But lovely as a landscape in a dream.

LONGFELLOW.

Praise.**August 31.**

O LORD of heaven and earth and sea
To Thee al' praise and glory be !
How shall we show our love to Thee
Who givest all ?

The golden sunshine, vernal air,
Sweet flowers and fruit Thy love declare,
When harvests ripen Thou art there
Who givest all.

For peaceful homes and healthful days,
For all the blessings earth displays,
We owe Thee thankfulness and praise
Who givest all. WORDSWORTH.

→* SEPTEMBER. *←

The Christian's Standard.

September 1.

HE liveth long who liveth well :
All else is being flung away ;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of true things truly done each day.
Be what thou seemest ; live thy creed ;
Hold up to earth the torch divine ;
Be what thou prayest to be made ;
Let the great Master's steps be thine.

H. BONAR.

' Use this World as not abusing it.'

September 2.

CULTIVATE not only the corn-fields of your mind, but the pleasure-grounds also. Every faculty and every study become ennobled and sanctified when directed, by one whose constraining motive is the love of Christ, towards a good object. Let not the Christian then think 'scorn of the pleasant land : '—that land is the field of ancient and modern literature—of philosophy in almost all its departments—of the arts of reasoning and persuasion. Every part of it may be cultivated with advantage, as the land of Canaan when bestowed on God's peculiar people. They were not commanded to let it lie waste, as incurably polluted by the abominations of its first inhabitants ; but to cultivate it, and dwell in it, living in obedience to the Divine laws, and dedicating its choicest fruits to the Lord their God.

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

Discontent.

September 3.

SOME murmur when their sky is clear.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

YES, it is true, and not alone
As *metaphor* is true.
How often do we hear a moan
Over a 'heaven of blue.'
Even if no 'small fleck' be there,
Even if a sweet and balmy air
Breathe round them to renew ;
They say, 'Would I were elsewhere,
This sky—it is not blue ;
Pleases me not, this Island air—
All is subdued in hue ;
And rain descends, and vapours rise :—
I long, I long for southern skies !'
Let us our murmurs put to sleep,
Strive to discern the best
Where duty calls :—and for the rest,
Unpleased, then silence keep.
And surely wheresoe'er we roam
Bright things we can recall in this our Island
home.

C. S.

Lobe of God and Man.**September 4.**

O HEARTS of love ! O souls that turn
Like sunflowers to the pure and blest !
To you the truth is manifest :
For they the mind of Christ discern
Who lean, like John, upon His breast.

J. G. WHITTIER.

LIFE, I repeat, is energy of love
Divine and human : exercised in pain,
In strife, and tribulation, and ordained,
If so approved and sanctified, to pass
Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy.

WORDSWORTH.**A High Standard.****September 5.**

As it will raise our endeavour high, to look on the highest pattern, so it will lay our thoughts low concerning ourselves. Men compare themselves with men, and readily with the worst, and flatter themselves with their comparative betterness. This is not the way to see our spots, to look into the muddy streams of profane men's lives ; but look into the clear fountain of the Word, and there we may both discern and wash them. Consider the infinite holiness of God, and this will humble us to the dust. **ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.**

THEY measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

2 Cor. x. 12.

The Dead.**September 6.**

MY thoughts oft rest with thee in thy cold grave,
 Through the long wintry night when wind and wave
 Rock the dark house where thy poor head is laid.
 Yet hush, my fond heart, hush ! there is a shore
 Of better promise : and I know a last,
 When the long sabbath of the tomb is past,
 We two shall meet in Christ—to part no more.

H. KIRKE WHITE.

‘The Lord looked on Peter.’**September 7.**

WHEN first Thy sweet and gracious eye
 Vouchsafed even in the midst of youth and night
 To look upon me, who before did lie
 Weltering in sinne,
 I felt a sugared, strange delight,
 Passing all cordials made by any art,
 Bedew, embalme, and overrunne my heart,
 And take it in.
 If Thy first glance so powerfull be,
 A mirth but open’d and seal’d up again,
 What wonders shall we feel when we shall see
 Thy full-ey’d love !
 When Thou shalt look us out of pain,
 And one aspect of Thine spend in delight,
 More than a thousand sunnes disburse in light,
 In heaven above.

GEORGE HERBERT.

'Walking with God.'

September 8.

THY hand in His, like fondest, happiest child,
Place thou, nor draw it for a moment thence;
Walk thou with Him, a Father reconciled,
Till in His own good time He call thee hence.
Walk with Him now, so shall thy way be bright,
And all thy soul be filled with His most glorious
light.

H. BONAR.

THE path of the just is as the shining light, which
shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Prov. iv. 18.

Diversity.

September 9.

YEA, there be saints who are not like the painted
And haloed figures fixed upon the pane;
Not outwardly and visibly ensainted,
But hiding deep the light which they contain.
The rugged gentleness, the wit, whose glory
Flashed like a sword because its edge was keen,
The fine antithesis, the flowing story:—
Beneath such things the sainthood is not seen.
Till from the pillow of the thinker, lying
In weakness, comes the teaching then best taught,
That the true crown for any soul in dying,
Is Christ, not genius, and is faith, not thought.

REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER.

God's Presence in times of Rejoicing.**September 10.**

NONE need wonder to find the Lord of life at that festival, for He came to sanctify all life, to consecrate its times of joy, as its times of sorrow ; all experience telling us that it is times of gladness which especially need such a sanctifying power and presence of the Lord. In times of sorrow the sense of God's nearness comes more naturally out : in these it is in danger to be forgotten. . . . His should be at once a harder and a higher task, to mingle with and purify the common life of men ; to assert and bring out the glory which was hidden in its every relation.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

Help in Discouragement.**September 11.**

SWEET thought of God, now do thy work
As thou hast done before ;
Wake up, and tears will wake with thee,
And the dull mood be o'er.

The very thinking of the thought
Without or praise or prayer,
Gives life to know and light to do,
And marvellous strength to bear.

'Tis not His justice or His power,
Beauty, or blest abode,
But the mere unexpanded thought
Of the eternal God.

F. W. FABER.

In Trouble.

September 12.

TILL Death the weary spirit free,
Thy God hath said, 'tis good for thee
To walk by faith and not by sight ;
Take it on trust a little while ;
Soon shalt thou read the mystery right
In the full sunshine of His smile.

KESLE.

On entering Life.

September 13.

I WILL not wake the past ; it lies
In memory's arms asleep ;
Look back with fond forgiving eyes
And fond remembrance keep.

I will not wake the past, but yet,
O cherish pleasures gone,
Nor His unfailing love forget
Whose hand has led thee on.

Will He not lead thee still ? to Him
Thy hopes and fears consign,
Then, in the future far and dim,
His blessing shall be thine.

Fair be the heritage in life
By Him, thy Father given,
May joy and woe, and peace and strife,
All train thy soul for heaven.

MATILDA STURGE.

How to meet Affliction.**September 14.**

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee, do thou
With courtesy receive him; rise and bow,
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave;
Then lay before him all thou hast; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmorial calmness; grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free.

AUBREY DE VERE.

Christian Union in the Fatherhood of God.**September 15.**

IF we are distressed by strife and self-seeking, if jealousies and divisions hinder the progress and mar the glory of the Church, if rivalry and ambition disturb the great family of nations, let us hold fast the truth which outlives the storms of earth: let us concentrate in one energy of supplication all the thoughts of our common brotherhood: let us offer up unweariedly the prayer which Christ hath taught us, in His fellowship and by His strength—Father, *our Father*,—that last best name, which gives to the ear of faith a promise of union underlying all differences, and reaching beyond all time, of union which is established and not broken by death, of union which is consummated in the open vision of God.

REV. BROOKE FOSS WESTCOTT, D.D.

Parting.

September 16.

CAN I bless thee, my belovèd—can I bless thee?
What blessing word can I
From mine own tears keep dry?

* * * *

May God bless thee, my belovèd—may God bless thee?

E. B. BROWNING.

‘BLESS me ere I go!’

Oh, then I sadly thought, but did not speak :
How may I bless thee, I, oft proved so weak,
So poor in blessing that I can but love,
Nor even bless through loving? I will seek
For that I cannot give. ‘May One above,
Belovèd, love thee, keep thee, bless thee still!’
I spake these words in sadness, but a flame
Did sweep them from my lips; the next that
came

Was even as a Message,—‘*and He will.*’

DORA GREENWELL.

Trouble.

September 17.

O LIFE ! O Death ! O World ! O Time !
O Grave where all things flow !
’Tis yours to make our lot sublime
With your great weight of woe.
Though sharpest anguish hearts may wring,
Though bosoms torn may be,
Yet suffering is a holy thing :—
Without it, what were we ?

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

'Judge righteous Judgment.**September 18.**

THERE is an evil and a good
In every soul unknown to thee ;
A darker and a brighter mood
Than aught thine eye can ever see ;
Words, actions, faintly mark the whole
That lies within a human soul.

Perhaps thy sterner mind condemns
Some brother mind, that, reasoning less,
The tide of error faintly stems,
In pain, in grief, in weariness ;
Thou call'st him weak, he may be so,
What made him weak thou canst not know.

The pure, the holy, they perchance
About thy path have still been seen ;
Nor could thy foot one step advance,
But there some pious aid hath been.
How happy in that blessed state !
O pray for hearts more desolate.

EMILY TAYLOR.

Noble Thoughts.**September 19.**

WE can only have the highest happiness—such as goes along with being a great man—by having wide thoughts and much feeling for the rest of the world as well as ourselves : and this sort of happiness often brings so much pain with it, that we can only tell it from pain by its being what we would choose before *everything* else, because our souls see it is good.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Prayer and Praise.

September 20.

WHEN thou art sad or sore perplexed,
 Pressed above strength by duties manifold,
 Or by the faults of others vexed,
 Or mourning for the griefs of earth untold ;
 The time to *pray*, behold !

When thou canst lift thy head and say,
 'The sky is clearer—much there is to cheer ;
 He heard, doth He not hear alway ?
 He is a God not afar off, but near :'
 Thank thou Him day by day.

When the 'clear shining after rain'
 Causes the heart to leap, and hope to spring,
 And vexing thoughts retreat again,
 O take Him then joyful thankoffering :—
 Thou then shalt *praises* sing.
 C. S.

The Lessons of Life.

September 21.

LIFE teaches us its lessons by degrees,
 And slowly yields its secrets ; as some hill,
 Which in the shadeless noon lay smooth and still,
 Reveals undreamed-of chasms, if a breeze
 Fleck it with cloud-born shadows ; so are these
 Learnt by long watching as the sunbeams fill
 Our depths, and the storm chasten, if we will
 But strive to see them as our Father sees.

* * * *

Nor shall our feet slip on the mountain side,
 Having the Lord for Ruler and for Guide.

J. E. A. BROWN.

Mutual Sympathy.**September 22.**

To be understood is to be twice oneself. To find that another mind than our own has analysed our position, and entered into our doubts, is armour against danger and assurance of sanity. Hard it is for a man to be alone in trouble. He blanches, partly from ignorance, and in part because in his loneliness he is not afraid to blench. And though God be for ever present with every man, yet were mankind created for mutual sympathy, and through that sympathy it is that God indirectly seeks to impress His love upon us. There may come a season whereto no merely human aid can minister, and well for man if in that time he have already recognised the Divine inspiration of all human charity.

JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

Bereavement.**September 23.**

THOU wast the Source of all that love
Which makes me glad no more ;
And Thou hast taken to Thyself
What was Thine own before :
Thine, and mine too, O Good to give,
O Faithful to restore !

That loving spirit is withdrawn
From every shade of sin ;
And I in sympathy with her
A holier life begin.
Yes ! to her new delight in Thee
I, Lord, can enter in.

A. L. WARING.

Age and Youth.

September 24.

CRABBED age and youth
Cannot live together. SHAKESPEARE.

CRABBED Age !—ah, Youth, I grant you
Crabbed Age can ne'er enchant you :
But the Age that is not soured,
Though its hopes were all deflowered ;
Age that laughing, limpeth on,
When its speed and strength are gone ;
Age whose brow of sagest form
Whitens as the heart grows warm ;

* * * *

That devotes its latest leisure
Not to hoard, but give its treasure ;

* * * *

Loving life and all that's in it,
More and more each golden minute :
Age like this—ah ! tell me, Youth,
Tell me now a pleasant truth :
Cannot Youth and Age like this
Live together—linked in bliss ?

LEMAN BLANCHARD.

Advancing Years.**September 25.**

O'ER life's ocean, wide and pathless,
Thus would I with patience steer ;
No vain hope of journeying scatheless,
No proud boast to face down fear ;
Dark or bright His Providence,
Trust in God be my defence.

Time there was—'tis so no longer—
When I crowded every sail,
Battled with the waves, and stronger
Grew, as stronger grew the gale :
But my strength sank with the wind,
And the sea lay dead behind.

Cloud and sunshine, wind and weather,
Sense and sight are fleeing fast ;
Time and tide must fail together,
Life and death will soon be past ;
But where day's last spark declines
Glory everlasting shines.

JAMES MONTGOMER

A New Home.

September 26.

O FORTUNATE, O happy day,
When a new household finds its place
Among the myriad homes of earth
Like a new star just sprung to birth,
And rolled on its harmonious way
Into the boundless realms of space !

For two alone, there in the hall
Is spread the table round and small ;
Upon the polished silver shine
The evening lamps, but, more divine,
The light of love shines over all ;
Of love that says, not mine, and thine,
But ours, for ours is thine and mine.

LONGFELLOW.

Longing for the Divine Presence.

September 27.

OH that I knew where I might find Him ! that
I might come even to His seat ! Job, xxiii. 3.

I WENT, for He mightily wins
Weary souls to His peaceful retreat ;
And He gave me forgiveness of sins,
And songs that I love to repeat :
And oft as mine enemy came,
My views of His glory to dim,
He taught me to trust in His name,
And to triumph by leaning on Him.

A. L. WARING.

Lights and Shadows.**September 28.**

THE gloomiest day hath gleams of light ;
The darkest wave hath light foam near it ;
And twinkles through the cloudiest night
Some solitary star to cheer it.
The gloomiest soul is not all gloom ;
The saddest heart is not all sadness ;
And sweetly o'er the darkest doom
There shines some lingering beam of gladness.
Despair is never quite despair ;
Nor life nor death the future closes ;
And round the shadowy brow of Care
Will Hope and Fancy twine their roses.

MRS. HEMANS.

Middle Life.**September 29.**

HIGH hope and wild endeavour
Have fled or sunk for ever ;
Only the swifter seasons onward press,
And every day that goes
Is a full-scented, full-blown garden rose,
Orbèd complete.
And every hour brings its own burden sweet
Of daily duty, precious care,
Wherefrom the visible landscape calm and clear,
Shows finer far, and the high heaven more near
Than ever morning skies of sunrise were.

LEWIS MORRIS.

On Leaving an Old Home.

September 30.

ARISE ye and depart, for this is not your rest.

SEEMS it to us, blind circumstance,
Or fate, or some ill-omened chance
Directs the striking of our tent?
Has many a happy year been spent
And many a season dear to thought
Been passed beneath the familiar roof?
And seems it, as if this were proof
That all our joy is come to nought?
It is not so! when God directs
Our path in all things, as we pray,
His people's journeyings He protects,
And makes it *best* to go or stay.

Peace is before us as behind,
If to fulfil His Will we steadfast set our mind.

C. S.

→* OCTOBER. *←

In Time of Distress.

October 1.

LORD, it is Thou ! and I can walk
Upon the heaving sea,
Firm in a vexed unquiet way,
Because I come to Thee.
If thou art all I hope to gain,
And all I fear to miss,
There is a highway for my heart
Through rougher seas than this.

These waters would not hold me up
If Thou wert not my end ;
But whom Thou callest to Thyself,
Even winds and waves defend.
Our very perils shut us in
To Thy supporting care :
We venture on the awful deep
And find our courage there.

A. L. WARING.

True Cheerfulness.**October 2.**

Do you imagine, that when you give yourself to the Lord Jesus you ought no longer to laugh, to play, to be merry together? On the contrary, there are none who have so much right to gaiety of heart as the children of God. St. Paul tells us to rejoice evermore. There is a time for everything. Prayer itself, and other religious exercises, which are meant to be to the honour of God, may become displeasing to Him, and even sinful, if we suffer them to cause us to neglect the work which He has entrusted to us to do. Merriment, fun, laughter, and gaiety of heart, with constant remembrance of the presence of God, if not interfering with, but refreshing you for your needful work, may be, and are, good, and pleasing to God.

J. F. OBERLIN.

The Robin in Autumn.**October 3.**

SWEET messenger of 'calm decay,'
Saluting sorrow as you may,
As one still bent to find or make the best,
In thee, and in this quiet mead,
The lesson of sweet peace I read,
Rather in all to be resigned than blest.

KEBLE.

→* OCTOBER. *←

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But whom Thou callest to Thyself,
Even winds and waves defend.
Our very perils shut us in
To Thy supporting care :
We venture on the awful deep
And find our courage there.

A. L. WARING.

A Summer Day in Autumn.**October 6.**

It was a day that sent into the heart
A summer feeling : even the insect swarms
From the dark nooks and coverts issued forth,
To sport through one day of existence more.
The solitary primrose on the bank
Seemed now as if it had no cause to mourn
Its bleak autumnal birth ; the rocks and shores,
The forests, and the everlasting hills,
Smiled in the joyful sunshine : they partook
The universal blessing.

SOUTHEY.

Our True Life.**October 7.**

To breathe, and wake, and sleep,
To smile, to sigh, to grieve,
To move in idleness through earth,
This, this is not to live !
Make haste, O man, to live.

The useful, not the great,
The thing that never dies,
The silent toil that is not last,
Set these before thine eyes ;
Make haste, O man, to live.

REV. H. BONAR, D.D.

Disappointment.**October 8.**

BEHIND the soft, bright summer cloud,
That makes such haste to melt and die,
Our wistful gaze is oft allowed
A glimpse of the unchanging sky :
Let storm and darkness do their worst,
For the last dream the heart may ache,
The heart may ache but may not burst :
Heaven will not leave thee nor forsake.

KEBLE.

Our Life.**October 9.**

NOT many lives, but only one, have we—
One, only one ;
How sacred should that one life ever be,
That narrow span !
Day after day filled up with blessèd toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil.
Our being is no shadow of thin air,
No vacant dream,
No fable of the things that never were,
But only seem.
'Tis full of meaning, as of mystery,
Though strange and solemn may that meaning be.

REV. H. BONAR, D.D.

Watch and Pray.**October 10.**

'WATCH ! watch and pray !' in suffering hour
Thus He exclaimed who felt its power
And triumphed in the strife.
Victor of death, Thy voice I hear,—
Fain would I watch with holy fear,
Would watch and pray through life's career,
And only end with life. DR. MASON GOOD.

Quiet from God.**October 11.**

QUIET from God—it cometh not to still
The vast and high aspirings of the soul,
The deep emotions that the spirit fill,
And speed its purpose onward to the goal.
It dims not youth's bright eye,
Bends not joy's lofty brow ;
No guileless ecstasy
Need in its presence bow.

It comes not in a sullen form to place
Life's greatest good in an inglorious rest,
Through a dull beaten track its way to trace,
And to lethargic slumber lull the breast.
Action may be its sphere,
Mountain paths, boundless fields,
O'er billows its career :
This is the strength it yields. ANON.

In Anxiety.**October 12.**

O THOU who art our life,
Be with us through the strife !
Was not Thy head by earth's fierce tempest bowed ?
Raise Thou our eyes above,
To see a Father's love
Beam, like a bow of promise through the cloud.
Even through the awful gloom
Which hovers o'er the tomb,
That light of love our guiding star shall be ;
Our spirits shall not dread
The shadowy way to tread,
Friend, Guardian, Saviour, which doth lead to Thee.
ANON.

In Middle Life.**October 13.**

'TIS now too late to cast about for friends ;
The expectation of my little life,
In cruel tables skilfully compiled,
Is only fifteen years. Well, be it so ;
I gain at least this profit from the lack
Of so much human love, that love's one Source
Is longed for more—the love of God, which love
Creates some answering love even in me.
R. B. RUTTER.

Duty.**October 14.**

WHAT I pray for you is, that you may keep your eye fixed on duty ; that your life may be directed to it like the magnet to the pole, in storm, in cloud, and darkness ; that you may be stern with yourself, and strict : then you will find comfort and strength in duty : and that to this devotion to duty you may gradually add the growing, quiet fervour, deep down in your heart, of love to God and man.

REV. J. M. WILSON.

God in Nature.**October 15.**

THOU art, O God ! the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see ;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from Thee :
Where'er we turn Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine.

MOORE.

THESE are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty ! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair : Thyself how wondrous then !
MILTON.

Duty.**October 16.**

IN the long run we should find our chief delight in the ordinary pursuits and duties of life, rather than in occasional release from them.

FITCH.

THAT supremely hallowed motive which men call Duty, but which can have no inward constraining existence save through some form of believing love.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Aspiration.**October 17.**

I WANT a heart to pray,
To pray and never cease,
Never to murmur at Thy stay
Or wish my sufferings less.
This blessing above all,
Always to pray, I want,
Out of the deep on Thee to call,
And never, never faint.

I rest upon Thy word ;
Thy promise is for me ;
My succour and salvation, Lord,
Shall surely come from Thee.
But let me still abide,
Nor from my hope remove,
Till Thou my patient spirit guide
Into Thy perfect love. CHARLES WESLEY.

A Conscience at Peace.**October 18.**

O THAT our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such,
That not an image of the past
Should fear the pencil's touch !

Retirement then might hourly look
Upon a soothing scene,
Age steal to his allotted nook,
Contented and serene ;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,
In frosty moonlight glistening ;
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep,
To their own far-off murmurs listening.

WORDSWORTH.**Religion in Daily Life.****October 19.**

I KNOW you think my pursuits are too much for earth—perhaps it may be so. I think but few are called to entire religious service : I am not one of those few. What I think is right to be done, and this I wish were my case, is that a sense of religious responsibility and feeling should pervade all we do, so that all our secular duties should be seasoned with it.

J. P. S.

The Dead.**October 20.**

By the heart's wound when most gory,
By the longest agony,
Smile ! behold in sudden glory
The Transfigured smiles on *thee* !

And ye lifted up your head, and it seemed as if He said,
'My beloved, is it so ?
Have ye tasted of My woe ?
Of My Heaven ye shall not fail !'
He stands brightly where the shade is,
With the keys of Death and Hades,
And there ends the mournful tale—
So hopefully ye think upon the dead !

E. B. BROWNING.

To Go, or Stay?**October 21.**

STAY, stay at home, my heart, and rest,
Home-keeping hearts are happiest ;
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care :
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt :
To stay at home is best. LONGFELLOW.

Praise.**October 22.**

O YE children of men, bless ye the Lord: praise Him
and magnify Him for ever.

O ye humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord:
praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

Shall I join the hymn of praise ?

Can I still the murmuring thought,
And the lurking discontent,
That but now my spirit rent ?

Can my laggard soul be brought
Joyful anthems to upraise ?

And with 'humble men of heart'
Lift my voice and take my part ?

Lord ! Thy Spirit breathe on me,

And I will praise Thee with Thy 'faithful three.'

C. S.

An Aim in Life.**October 23.**

NAY, best it is indeed

To spend ourselves upon the general good ;

And, oft misunderstood,

To strive to lift the knees and limbs that bleed :—

This is the best, the fullest meed.

Let ignorance assail or hatred sneer ;

Who loves his race, he shall not fear :

He suffers not for long,

Who doth his soul possess in loving, and grows strong.

LEWIS MORRIS.

Joyful Service.**October 24.**

So may I shed abroad the blessing lent,
Whether of earthly or celestial hue,
And in Thy service all received be spent,
To whom alone the debt of all is due.
Blessing and blest, sweet honour, sweet employ,
Happy, and filling every heart with joy.

JAMES EDMESTON.

By influence of the Light Divine
Let thy own light to others shine ;
Reflect all Heaven's propitious rays,
In ardent love and cheerful praise.

BISHOP KEN.

In Trouble.**October 25.**

THOU who art weeping
When all are sleeping,
Sad vigil keeping
Far into night ;
Nurse not thy sorrow
Into to-morrow,
From Jesus borrow,
Comfort and strength.
Long though He try thee,
Still He stands by thee,
He shall supply thee
Richly at length.

DEAN ALFORD.

In Prospect of Trouble.**October 26.**

WHEN I prayed for strength to bear the look of the calamity then it became bearable, and slowly it grew bright, and at its vanishing there was a glory left behind. And so what I prayed against at first, proved at last to have been an angel with me entertained unawares.

There is no burden of the spirit but is lightened by kneeling under it. Little by little, the bitterest feelings are sweetened by the mention of them in prayer. And agony itself stops swelling if it can only cry sincerely, 'My God ! my God !'

ANON.

Autumn.**October 27.**

GONE are the birds that were our summer guests,
With the last sheaves return the labouring wains.
All things are symbols : the external shows
Of Nature have their image in the mind,
As flowers, and fruits, and falling of the leaves ;
The song-birds leave us at the summer's close,
Only the empty nests are left behind,
And pipings of the quail among the sheaves.

LONGFELLOW.

'Widows' Mites.'**October 28.**

It is not in coin alone that the 'widow's mite' may be given to God and cast into His treasury. There are other small things in life we may give to His honour. There are smiles, and kind little words, and soft answers, and charitable judgments, and a silent patience amidst the irritating trials of every-day life; there is a gentle and kindly bearing in daily intercourse, a resolute thought that others may suffer from us, and yet no difference shall sour us;—these are the 'mites' in our Christian life which we may give to God out of reverence, love, and gratitude.

REV. JOHN CONGREVE.**The Beauty of Nature and Immortality.****October 29.**

I RECLINE upon the still unwithered grass, and whisper to myself, 'O perfect day! O beautiful world! O beneficent God!' and it is the promise of a blessed eternity; for our Creator would never have made such lovely days, and have given us the deep hearts to enjoy them, above and beyond all thought, unless we were meant to be immortal. This sunshine is the golden pledge thereof: it beams through the gates of Paradise, and shows us glimpses far inward.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Useful Lives.**October 30.**

BE useful where thou livest, that they may
Both want and wish thy pleasing presence still.
. . . . Finde out men's wants and will,
And meet them there. All worldly joyes go lesse
To the one joy of doing kindnesses.

Let thy minde still be bent, still plotting where,
And when, and how, the business may be done.

GEORGE HERBERT.

Noble Aims.**October 31.**

IF you mean to act nobly, and seek to know the best things that God has put within reach of men, you must learn to fix your mind on that end, and not on what will happen to you because of it. And remember, if you were to choose something lower, and make it the rule of your life to seek your own pleasure, and escape from what is disagreeable, calamity might come just the same; and it would be calamity falling on base minds, which is the one form of sorrow which has no balm in it.

GEORGE ELIOT.

→* NOVEMBER. *←

The Last of Autumn.

November 1.

YET one smile more, departing, distant sun !
One mellow smile through the soft vapoury air,
Ere o'er the frozen earth the loud winds run,
Or snows are sifted o'er the meadows bare :
One smile on the brown hills and naked trees,
And the dark rocks whose summer wreaths are cast,
And the blue gentian flower, that in the breeze
Nods lonely, of her beauteous race the last.
Yet a few sunny days in which the bee
Shall murmur by the hedge that skirts the way ;
The cricket chirp upon the russet lea,
And man delight to linger in thy ray :
Yet one rich smile, and we will try to bear
The piercing winter frost, and winds, and darkened air.

W. C. BRYANT.

The Love of God.

November 2.

How crushed one would be if one did not believe that God's love to all people is the only source of ours, and that it only can enkindle ours ! That is a truth I am sure of, and have in a manner been sure of at all times, whatever doubts might be pressing upon me. Prayer is surely not asking God to love them, and do them good because we love them better than He does : but offering ourselves as sacrifices to Him, that He may fill us with His love and send us on His errands.

F. D. MAURICE.

Duty.**November 3.**

DUTY is a power which rises with us in the morning and goes to rest with us at night. It is co-extensive with the action of our intelligence. It is the shadow which cleaves to us, go where we will, and which only leaves us when we leave the light of life.

W. E. GLADSTONE.

STERN daughter of the voice of God !

O Duty ! if that name thou love,

Who art a light to guide, a rod

To check the erring, and reprove.

* * * *

Thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

WORDSWORTH.

The Autumn of Life.**November 4.**

OUR Summer note is strong,
The confidence of manhood speaks aloud ;
It has to teach and counsel ; and its tone
Must have a tender firmness in its song :
Not tremble into tears, nor idly moan.

O Autumn ! what of thee ?

Be chastened tenderness thy guiding breath,
Knowledge of storm and sunshine temper thee,
Patience subdue thee, calm love comfort thee,
And faith lend sweetness to thy psalm of death.

J. E. A. BROWN.

The Return Home.**November 5.**

Now safe returned, with wandering tired,
No more my little home I'll leave !
And many a tale of what I've seen
Shall while away the winter's eve.
Oh, I have wandered far and wide,
O'er many a distant foreign land ;
Each place, each province I have tried,
And sung and danced my saraband :
But all their charms could not prevail
To steal my heart from yonder vale.

H. KIRKE WHITE.**Endurance.****November 6.**

MAY He keep me gentle and patient, yet active and zealous. May He make me humble-minded in this, that I do not look for good things as my portion here, but rather should look for trouble, as what I deserve, and as what Christ's people are to bear. Only, O Lord, strengthen me to bear it, whether it visit me in mind, body, or estate. Let me cherish a sober mind, to be ready to bear evenly, and not sullenly. O Lord, reveal to me Thyself in Christ Jesus, which knowledge will make all suffering and all trials easy.

DR. ARNOLD.

The Manner of our Death.

November 7.

WHICH is the happiest death to die ?

Oh, said one, if I might choovē,
Long at the gate of bliss would I lie,
And feast my spirit ere it fly
With bright celestial views.

No, said another, not so I,
Sudden as thought is the death I would die,

* * * *

Not slain, but caught up, as it were,
To meet my Saviour in the air. JAMES EDMISTON.

WHY should I choose ? for in Thy love
Most surely I descry
A gentler death than I myself
Should dare to ask to die.

But when, and where, and by what pain,
All this is one to me ;
I only long for such a death
As most shall honour Thee. F. W. FABER.

Old Age.

November 8.

How quiet shows the woodland scene !

Each flower and tree, its duty done,
Reposing in decay serene,

Like weary men, when age is won ;
Such calm old age as conscience pure
And self-commanding hearts ensure ;
Waiting their summons to the sky,
Content to live, but not afraid to die. KEBLE.

'Lowliness of Mind.'

November 9.

'TWERE easy, 'mid the battle's blast,
 To front the foe without dismay,
 When music plays, and friends stand fast ;
 But when on lowlier warfare cast,
 'Tis harder to obey.

To pine aloof, 'mid victories won,
 To lose the guerdon, dearly prized,
 The work we longed to compass, done,
 Accomplished by some meaner one
 Whose aid our strength despised.

* * * *

O teach us lowly to remain,
 Without one murmur, at Thy feet !
 Nor of the heaviest cross complain,
 Till Thou each docile spirit train
 Into Thy will complete.

W. MORLEY PUNSHON.

The Changes in Life.

November 10.

CONTINUAL good is sure to cloy ;
 'Tis from the mixture of alloy
 That ease is ease, that joy is joy,
 And ecstasy is ecstasy.

RICHARD WESTALL.

WE know not what is right, nor what is best :
 Direct our footsteps, Lord ! and choose our place of
 rest.

JAMES EDMESTON.

Light in Darkness.**November 11.**

Oh! seem not they are best alone,
Whose lives a peaceful terror keep;
The Power who rules man hath shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again
The lids that overflow with tears;
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.

For God hath marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear,
And Heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all His children suffer here. W. C. BRANT.

In Sickness.**November 12.**

In truth my bark of life is swiftly sailing
Towards Him who lighteneth all her load of pain;
I grow more weary of my inward ailing;
I long to live where Death shall cease to reign;
And leaving suns that set and moons that wane,
'To see that living Light which cannot die;
'To swell my Monarch's praise, to join His train,
And 'Holy, holy, holy,' ever cry.
No sin, nor sorrow more, a glorious company.

R. B. RUTTER.

Duty.

November 13.

IN all situations there is a duty, and our highest blessedness lies in doing it.

CARLYLE.

THEN a voice within his breast
Whispered, audible and clear,
As if to the outward ear :
'Do thy duty—that is best ;
Leave unto thy Lord the rest.'

LONGFELLOW.

DUTY is an angel, reverently beloved, that walks beside the man with solemn steps.

WILLIAM MOUNTFORD.

Secret Peace.

November 14.

ABOVE the dissonance of time,
And discord of its angry words
I hear the everlasting chime ;
The music of unjarring chords.

H. BONAR.

THERE are, in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of th' everlasting chime ;
Who carry music in their heart,
Through dusty lane and wrangling mart ;
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their souls a secret strain repeat.

KEBLE.

In Sickness.—(Sunday.)**November 15.**

So as our Sabbaths hasten past,
And rounding years bring nigh the last ;
When sinks the sun behind the hill,
And all the 'weary wheels' stand still :

When by our bed the loved ones weep,
And death-dews o'er the forehead creep,
And vain is help or hope from men :—
Jesus, our Lord ! receive us then.

J. MORLEY PUNSHON.

Living for Others.**November 16.**

If we had lost our own chief good, other people's
good would remain, and that is worth trying for. . . .
What do we live for, if it is not to make life less
difficult to each other ?

GEORGE ELIOT.

SMALL service is true service while it lasts,
Of humblest friends, bright creature ! scorn not one ;
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the sun.

WORDSWORTH.

Unselfish Sorrow.

November 17.

SHALL we rest us here,
And, by relating tales of others' griefs,
See if 'twill teach us to forget our own?

SHAKESPEARE.

TRUE piety is cheerful as the day ;
Will weep indeed, and make a pitying moan
For others' woes, but smiles upon her own.

COWPER.

The Country in Winter.

November 18.

WHEN shrieked

The bleak November winds, and smote the woods,
And the brown fields were herbless, and the shades
That met above the merry rivulet
Were spoiled, I sought, I loved them ; still they seemed
Like old companions in adversity.
Still there was beauty in my walks ; the brook,
Bordered with sparkling frost-work, was as gay
As with its fringe of summer flowers. Afar,
The village with its spire, the path of streams
And dim receding valleys, hid before
By interposing trees, lay visible
Through the bare grove, and my familiar haunts
Seemed new to me.

W. C. BRYANT.

God's Guidance.**November 19.**

We treat God with irreverence by banishing Him from our thoughts, not by referring to Him on slight occasions. His is not the finite authority or intelligence which cannot be troubled with small things. There is nothing so small but that we may honour God by asking His guidance of it, or insult Him by taking it into our own hands.

RUSKIN.

The Blessing of Prayer.**November 20.**

OH, what a privilege to kneel,
Fall down and worship at Thy feet,
My God ! my Father ! and to feel
With Thee communion high and sweet.
To pour my spirit out in prayer,
Or on the wings of praise ascend,
Like Moses, to the mount, and there
Converse with Thee, as friend with Friend.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

How many tempests I have seen !
How oft the sun I could not see,
When clouds rolled o'er to intervene,
And veiled His cheering smile from me !
Yet even in the darkest hour
The Sun of Righteousness was there
Above the mist, which knew His power,
And felt the breath of prayer. **R. B. RUTTER.**

In Trouble.**November 21.**

WHAT is this Power,
Against whose might, on all sides pressing us,
We strive with fierce impatience, which but lays
Our own frail spirits prostrate ?

Now I know
Thy Hand, my God !—and they are soonest crushed
That most withstand it. I resist no more.
A light, a light springs up from grief and death,
Which with its solemn radiance doth reveal
Why we have been thus tried. MRS. HEMANS.

'Getting on in Life.'**November 22.**

It seemed to me that 'getting on' was not the true motive to a noble and godly life. It struck me that being noble and gentle, and just and true, and meek and lowly of heart, and kind and generous, and pure of heart and of life and speech, were in themselves far greater things than riches or high position could purchase. I found in the 19th Psalm and in the Sermon on the Mount that that was the Christian view. I found also that as much light as that had been given to Plato. DANIEL MACMILLAN.

Our varied Lives.**November 23.**

SOME gaze on heaven, nor heed the earth,
Nursing with prayer the hidden life.
To some it seems, as from their birth
They entered on the world for strife—
For noble strife with wrong, and sin, and ill ;
And death shall find them battling bravely still.

To some is given the searching mind
To seek with pains long-buried lore ;
While others life's employment find
In searching Nature's boundless store,
The polished lens their guide to star or germ,
Heaping up knowledge in their life's brief term.

Thus devious though their pathways be,
Like rooks careering through the air,
If all *one* goal before them see,
Be but their heart and treasure *there*,
All shall be well ; nor let one traveller say,
'Quit thou thy path—*mine* is the better way.'

C. S.

A Hymn of returning Peace.

November 24.

LONG have I wandered, Saviour, I confess ;
'Twas I who left Thee, though I know not how.
With Thee alone was all the faithfulness,
And Thine the love that will receive me now.
Weary and travel-stained I long for rest,
Let me now find it leaning on Thy breast.
Keep me still near Thee, Shepherd kind and true,
When sin and sorrow tempt me to despair ;
When clouds of doubt obscure me from Thy view,
Keep me, still keep, in Thy unslumbering care.
Teach me to track Thy steps, and ever flee
All that could separate my soul from Thee.

M. S.

Light out of Darkness.

November 25.

THE light is born out of the dark.
Then let us humbly wait and hark
For whisper or for word :
The grandest message of God's lips,
His most sublime apocalypse,
Oft from the fiercest heart of flame are heard.

W. MORLEY PUNSHON.

THE NEW YEAR

January 1

It is a day of new beginnings, a day of new
 hopes, a day of new dreams. It is a day
 when the world is young again, when the
 heart is full of joy and the soul is
 at peace. It is a day when the
 sun rises with a new vigor and the
 stars shine with a new brightness.

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 when the sun rises with a new vigor and the stars shine with a
 new brightness.

WILLIAM MORRIS

Unselfishness.

November 27.

Unselfishness and abnegation of self, and devotion to
 others,

This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had
 taught her.

For was her love diffused, like to some odorous spices,
 without her waste her love, though filling the air with
 perfume

Other people who had none, nor wish in life but to
 follow

Alas! with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her
 nation

LONGFELLOW.

True Religion.**November 28.**

BUT true religion, sprung from God above,
Is, like her fountain, full of charity,
Embracing all things with a tender love,
Full of goodwill and meek expectancy ;
Full of true justice and sure verity.
In heart and voice—free, large, even infinite:
Not wedged in strait particularity,
But grasping all in her vast, active spright.
Bright lamp of God ! that men would joy in thy
pure light !

HENRY MORE (1640).

Happy Lives.**November 29.**

IT is one of the conditions of a happy life to exert our best, and best-liked faculties, in our daily occupations. And if these be not to our taste, there still may be happiness found in the exercise of our faculties to perform them well.

ANON.

No endeavour is in vain,
Its reward is in the doing ;
And the rapture of pursuing
Is the prize the vanquished gain.

LONGFELLOW.

The Giver of All.**November 30.**

THE eyes of the Lord are upon them that love Him : He is their mighty protection, strong stay, a defence from heat, and a cover from the sun at noon, a preserver from stumbling, and a help from falling. He raiseth up the soul and lighteneth the eyes ; He giveth health, life, and blessing.

Ecclus. xxxiv. 16, 17.

EVERY good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.

St. James, i. 17.

→* DECEMBER. *←

The Coming Winter.

December 1.

THEN welcome cold ! welcome, ye snowy nights !
Heaven midst your rage shall mingle pure delights,
And confidence of hope the soul sustain,
While devastation sweeps along the plain.
Nor shall the child of poverty despair,
But bless the Power that rules the changing year ;
Assured, though horrors round his cottage reign,
That Spring will come, and Nature smile again.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

Perplexity.

December 2.

OUR Lord God doth like a printer, who setteth the
letters backward ; we see and feel well His setting,
but we shall see the print yonder in the life to come.

LUTHER.

FOR now we see in a mirror, darkly ; but then face
to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know
fully, even as also I have been known fully.

1 Cor. xiii. 12.

My Old Bible.**December 3.**

LITTLE Bible, worn and faded,
Dearer than another thou ;
Thou wert mine ere life had shaded
To the hue it weareth now.

Thou wert mine when hope and youth
Flushed the cheek and lit the eye—
Sweeter memories, in truth,
Than of *these* around me lie.

Cares are heavy, faith is dim,
And the way seems rough and long ;
Far away I seem from Him
Who was then my strength and song.

Little Bible, guide for ages
To the saints upon their way,
Show me, teach me from thy pages,
Where my feet have gone astray.

MATILDA STURGEON

Family Affection.**December 4.**

LET those among you who are too young to know all that family affection means (and nobody *can* know it till they are able to compare it with other social sentiments), take my word for it, that nothing is ever like it, nothing will ever take its place. When the last duty of filial love is paid, and there remains nothing more for us to do for the beloved one for ever—when the form we cherished and sheltered from every breath lies out away in its lonely grave, round which the snows are falling and the winter winds are raving—then it seems as if all other duties are in comparison so remote, so indifferent, so devoid of all sacredness, that it is hard to rouse ourselves to fulfil them, save by the thought, ‘My father or my mother would have wished it.’

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

Submission.**December 5.**

SHOW me the path. I had forgotten Thee
When I was happy and free,
Walking down here in the gladsome light o’ the sun ;
But now I come and mourn ; O set my feet
In the road to Thy blest seat,
And for the rest, O God ! Thy will be done.

JEAN INGELOW.

I WAS not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Should’st lead me on ;
I loved to choose and see my path, but now
Lead Thou me on.

J. H. NEWMAN.

The Santa Diagonal.**December 6.**

As a fond mother, when the day is o'er,
Leads by the hand a little child to bed,
Half willing, half reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door,
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead,
Which, though more splendid, may not please
him more ;—

So Nature deals with us, and takes away
Our playthings one by one, and by the hand
Leads us to rest so gently, that we go
Scarce knowing if we wish to go or stay,
Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what
we know. LONGFELLOW.

Prayer.**December 7.**

PRAY, though the gift you ask for
May never comfort your fears,
May never repay your pleading ;
Yet pray, with hopeful tears :
An answer, not *that* you long for,
But diviner, will come one day ;
Your eyes are too dim to see it,
Yet strive, and wait, and pray.

A. A. PROCTER.

The Day of our Death.**December 8.**

THOU inevitable day,
When a voice to me shall say—
'Thou must rise and come away ;

All thine other journeys past,
Gird thee and make ready fast
For thy longest and thy last ;'—

Day, deep hidden from our sight
In impenetrable night,
Who may guess of thee aright ?

Little skills it when or how,
If thou comest then or now,
With a smooth or angry brow ;

Come thou must, and we must die :—
Jesus, Saviour, stand Thou by,
When that last sleep seals our eye.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

A Beautiful Old Age.**December 9.**

SUCH age how beautiful ! O lady bright,
Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined
By favouring nature and a saintly mind,
To something purer and more exquisite
Than flesh and blood, whene'er thou meet'st my sight,
When I behold thy blanched, unwithered cheek,
Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,
And head that droops because the soul is meek ;
Thee with the welcome snowdrop I compare,
That child of winter, prompting thoughts that climb
From desolation towards the genial prime ;
Or, with the moon, conquering earth's misty air,
And filling more and more with crystal light
As pensive evening deepens into night.

WORDSWORTH.

Praise.**December 10.**

OPEN thy heart to joy, nor think,
' I joy, yet stand on sorrow's brink,
Though the sun shine, yet rain is on the way.'
' Rejoice, praise God !' saith many a psalm,
And joy is grief's prospective balm :
So think not of the rain upon this glorious day.

C. S.

WHOSO offereth praise glorifieth Me.

Ps. L. 23.

In Difficulty.

December 11.

JESUS, my Saviour, look on me,
For I am weary and opprest ;
I come to cast my soul on Thee ;
Thou art my rest.

Look down on me, for I am weak ;
I feel the toilsome journey's length,
Thine aid omnipotent I seek ;
Thou art my strength.

I am bewildered on my way,
Dark and tempestuous is the night,
O shed Thou forth some cheering ray,
Thou art my light. JOHN R. MACDUFF.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be
afraid.

John, xiv. 27.

'A Word in Season.'

December 12.

A FRIEND is dear in silence, but in speech
How mighty ! for the heart will oft be stirred
Unto its depths by even a passing word
From lips beloved. J. E. A. BROWN.

WISE sayings often fall on barren ground, but a
kind word is never thrown away. SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

In Vexation.**December 13.**

FAINT not if prayer find tardy grace,
Though saintly knees be bowed,
But wait untired beneath the mountain's base ;
Soon will the healing cloud
Toward thee descend,—the voice of Love
Through the glad air will gently move :—
' Believe, and all may be : '—
The voice of Power command afar
The rushings of that ireful war,
And heart and tongue for prayer be free.

KEBLE.

LET not the sun go down upon your wrath.

Eph. iv. 26.

Living in Peace.**December 14.**

SEE how far thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knows not how to be angry with any one, or to be indignant save against self. It is no great thing to live with them that are good and meek, for this is naturally pleasing to all. But to be able to live peaceably with the obstinate and perverse or disorderly is a great grace, and a very praiseworthy and manly feat.

He that knows best how to suffer will enjoy the greater peace. Such an one is conqueror of himself, a friend of Christ, and an heir of heaven.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

Bereavement.**December 15.**

BUT since thou didst leave my side,
Following after, with my tear
Still upon thy cheek undried,
Seems the river far less wide,
And the hither shore more near.

* * * *

So God beckons by a hand
I have clasped unto His land ;
So He bids its dawn arise
On me, through beloved eyes ;
So the new, unearthly song,
Seems a strain remembered long ;
With the angel voices blend
Tones familiar, seraphs wear
Looks I loved on earth : oh, friend,
Kind companion, *thou* art there !

DORA GREENWELL.

Mutual Help.**December 16.**

O MIGHT we all our lineage prove,
Give and forgive, do good and love ;
By soft endearments in kind strife,
Lightening the load of daily life. **KEBLE.**

BEAR ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the
law of Christ. Gal. vi. 2.

St. Ag.

December 21.

And ever as the hair grows grey,
And the eyes dim,
And the limbs firm which toiled the long day,
The salutar limb,
Begin to stiffen and grow slow;
A night, my boy, have —
I've spent the season of the waning year.
For comes the deadly chill,
In words of mercy, and in cheer
The feet which toil against life's rugged hill;
I, have known the terrible and the fret,
I, have known it, and to cease
In a perishing peace,
I, calm to suffer pain, or, living to forget.
And reaching down a suffering hand
To those the sufferers are,
To lift them to the tranquil heights afar,
Wherein Time's conquerors stand.

LEWIS MORRIS.

Love.

December 22.

FAITH, Hope, and Love, at God's high altar shine,
Lamp triple-branched, and fed with oil divine.
Two of these triple lights shall once grow pale,
They burn *without*, but Love *within* the veil.
Nothing is true but Love, nor aught of worth;
Love is the incense that doth sweeten earth.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

The Joy of God's Presence.**December 23.**

THY presence has a wondrous power ;
The sharpest thorn becomes a flower,
And breathes a sweet perfume.
Whate'er looked dark and sad before,
With happy light shines silvered o'er—
There's no such thing as gloom !

Thou know'st I have a cross to bear ;
The needful stroke Thou dost not spare,
To keep me near Thy side :
But when I see the chastening rod
In Thy pierced hand, my Lord, my God,
I feel so satisfied. CHARLOTTE WILKINS.

Christmas Roses.**December 24.**

TYPES of angelic innocence are they,
They meet the storm clad in their virgin white,
Tinted with silvery green ; and on this day,
When Christ was born into the world, and night
To sunshine passed, these Christmas roses speak
In simple parables of sin forgiven
And washed as white as they ; of patience meek,
Biding the appointed time, though sorely driven ;
Of constancy no earthly storm can break ;
Of Faith, and Hope, and Love, enduring unto
Heaven. J. H.

Christmas Day.**December 25.****THIS** one glad day

Is the blue mantle clasping all the lights
That fast in the girdle of the year so fair,
When **Thou** wast born a man, because alway
Thou wast and art a man, through all the flights
Of thought and time, and thousandfold creation's play.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

O **Thou**, whose glorious, yet contracted light,
Wrap in night's mantle, stole into a manger,
Since my dark soul and brutish is Thy right,
To man, of all beasts, be not **Thou** a stranger.
Furnish and deck my soul, that **Thou** mayst have
A better lodging than a rack or grave.

GEORGE HERBERT.

The Retrospect of Life.**December 26.**

LOVE will grow deeper as the soul looks back
With tender gaze upon life's by-gone track ;
And sees a Father's hand has led the way,
And let the hindering thorns and briars grow,
And taken friends who cheered our earlier day,
Nor suffered life too evenly to flow.
O blessed retrospect !
Even now thou mayst reflect
And what thy joy shall be, when thou *the whole* dost
know.

C. S.

For ebbing.**December 27.**

MY soul went forth to meet the coming days,
And met a phantom, Sorrow, gaunt and grim :
I shrank and trembled at its menace dim,
And sore bewailed my lot, yet turned to gaze
Again and yet again. Through the far haze
It seemed to me a son of Anakim,
Or as that giant who was slain of him
Who tuned his harp of old to psalms of praise.
No song was mine, but, as the hours went by,
All in the chill of dawn I knelt to pray :
Then, as it almost touched me, drawing nigh,
Into thin mist the phantom passed away.
The sun rose, and I heard a Voice divine,
' *Fear not*, for I am with thee ; thou art Mine !'

J. E. A. BROWN.

Trusting for the future.**December 28.**

WHAT then ? I am not careful to inquire ;
I know there will be tears, and fears, and sorrow,
And then a loving Saviour drawing nigher,
And saying, '*I will answer for the morrow.*'
What then ? for all my sins His pardoning grace,
For all my wants and woes His loving-kindness ;
For darkest shades, the shining of God's face ;
And Christ's own hand to lead me in my blindness.

MRS. T. D. CREWDSON.

Retrospect.**December 29.**

LET us see, then, before this year dies out altogether, how we stand before God and our own consciences. There must have been enough for us all in the past year to enable us to try what has been the spirit of our life, both in doing and bearing; and so let us ask whether or not we have sought, in some poor way, to work the work of Him that sent us here whilst it is day, after the pattern and example of Him whom we call our Lord and Master.

REV. JOHN CONGREG.

Thanksgiving.**December 30.**

LET us give thanks with grateful soul
 To Him Who sendeth all,
 To Him Who bids the planets roll,
 And sees a sparrow fall.
 Though grief and tears may dim our joys,
 And care and strife arrest,
 'Tis man too often that alloys
 The lot his Maker blessed :
 While sunshine lights the boundless sky,
 And dewdrops feed the sod,
 While stars and rainbows live on high,
 Let us give thanks to God.

ELIZA COX

The Unknown Future.**December 31.**

UPON the threshold of another year
I pause, and bend the knee ;
And with strange thrills of faith and fear
Look up, O God, to Thee.

Dark is the way, and all unknown the land,
One step I can but see ;
O Father, take me by the hand,
I shall be safe with Thee.

J. TEMPERLEY GREY.

KEEP Thou my feet : I do not ask to see
The distant scene ; one step enough for me.

J. H. NEWMAN.

MY times are in Thy hand.

Ps. xxxi. 15.

INDEX TO SUBJECTS.

ABSENCE	June 15
ABSENT FRIENDS	July 27
ABIDE WITH ME	December 17
ADVANCING YEARS	June 3
DITTO	June 6
DITTO	September 25
ADVERSITY	August 27
AFFLICTION, HOW TO MEET	September 14
AFFLICTION, AFTER	May 25
AGE AND YOUTH	September 24
AMIABILITY	February 11
AIM IN LIFE	October 23
ANNIVERSARIES	August 30
ANXIETY	May 6
DITTO	October 12
APRIL	April 1
APPARENT FAILURE	February 22
ASPIRATION	January 28
DITTO	March 9
DITTO	October 17
ATTITUDE OF THE SOUL	July 23
AUTUMN	October 27
DITTO	November 1
AUTUMN OF LIFE	November 4
BENEFIT OF AFFLICTION	January 19

BEATIFIC VISION	February 18
BEREAVEMENT	April 2
DITTO	August 29
DITTO	September 23
DITTO	December 15
BEARING TROUBLE WILLINGLY	April 27
BELoved ONES DEPARTED	August 2
BEAUTY OF NATURE	October 29
BIRTH	February 12
BIBLE, AN OLD	December 3
BIRTHDAY IN MIDDLE LIFE	December 18
BROOK BY THE WAY	August 25
CHANGE OF PLACE	March 23
CHANGES IN LIFE	November 10
CHARITY	January 4
DITTO	August 7
CHEER, TO	February 14
CHEERFULNESS	October 2
CHRISTMAS DAY	December 25
CHRISTMAS ROSES	December 24
CHRIST OUR LIFE	January 23
DITTO	June 10
CHRIST OUR LIGHT	April 22
CHRIST'S PRESENCE	March 4
CHRISTIAN LIFE	April 23
CHRISTIAN STANDARD	September 1
CHRISTIAN UNION	September 15

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER	June 18
CHRISTIAN'S CALLING	April 6
CHURCH BELLS	May 24
CITY, IN A	January 10
CONFIDENCE IN GOD	July 17
CONSCIENCE AT PEACE.	October 18
CONTENTMENT	January 9
CONTENTED MIND.	January 15
COUNTRY CHURCH.	July 12
COUNTRY PARSON	May 31
DAISY	May 8
DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE	August 13
DAWN OF SUNDAY	February 4
DAY OF SMALL THINGS	May 26
DAY OF OUR DEATH	December 8
DEAD, THE	April 20
DITTO	September 6
DITTO	October 20
DEATH	February 3
DITTO	August 19
DEATH OF A CHILD	February 24
DEATH OF A DAUGHTER	October 4
DEATH OF A SISTER	July 29
DEATH WELCOME	July 28
DEPRESSION	April 24
DESPONDENCY	July 2
DESPONDENCY IN SPRING	May 22

DEPARTED SPIRIT	July 30
DIFFICULTY	January 20
DITTO	January 27
DITTO	June 27
DITTO	April 10
DITTO	December 11
DIFFICULTY, IN PROSPECT OF	April 16
DITTO	June 22
DIVINE GUIDANCE	June 11
DIVERSITY	September 9
DISAPPOINTMENT	October 8
DISCONTENT	September 3
DISCOURAGEMENT	February 23
DISCIPLINE OF LIFE	May 2
DITTO	May 23
DISTRESS, IN TIME OF	October 1
DOCTRINE AND LIFE	May 18
DOUBT	May 4
DUTY	January 3
DITTO	February 16
DITTO	March 19
DITTO	April 3
DITTO	July 10
DITTO	August 26
DITTO	October 14
DITTO	October 16
DITTO	November 3
DITTO	November 13

DUTY OF BEING HAPPY	August 9
DYING WORD	May 17
EARLY DEATH	January 6
DITTO	February 27
EARTH AND HEAVEN	November 26
EMMANUEL	March 29
ENDURANCE	November 6
ENTERING LIFE	September 13
ENJOYMENT OF LIFE	January 21
DITTO	March 5
'EVERY GOOD GIFT FROM ABOVE'	January 2
EXALTATION, TIMES OF	July 11
FAULTS OF OTHERS	January 14
FAMILY AFFECTION	December 4
'FELLOW-WORKERS WITH GOD'	February 25
FEAR OF DEATH	May 30
FOREBODING	December 27
'FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT'	February 9
FRIENDSHIP IN SORROW	March 14
FUTURE UNKNOWN	December 31
GETTING ON IN LIFE	November 22
GENTLE DISMISSAL, THE	December 6
GIVING	March 15
DITTO	July 15
GIVER OF ALL, THE	November 30

GOD IN NATURE	May 20
DITTO	June 7
DITTO	October 15
GUIDANCE	April 8
DITTO	November 19
GOD'S PRESENCE IN TIMES OF REJOICING	September 10
GOLDEN WEDDING-DAY	March 22
'GRANT US THY PEACE'	June 27
GROWING OLD	March 30
HAPPINESS IN ADVANCING AGE	April 28
HAPPINESS OF UNSELFISHNESS	March 8
HAPPY LIVES	November 29
HEAVEN	May 11
HEALTHY RELIGIOUS LIFE	February 10
HELP ON THE WAY	August 3
HELP IN DISCOURAGEMENT	September 11
HIGH STANDARD, A	September 5
HOW TO WORK	February 15
HOPE	June 8
DITTO	August 28
'HUMBLE MEN OF HEART'	May 7
HYMN OF PRAISE	July 9
'IGNORANCE IN ASKING'	February 19
DITTO	May 15
IMMORTALITY	July 24
'INSTANT IN PRAYER'	January 12

INDWELLING SPIRIT	January 30
INFANCY	February 21
DITTO	March 12

JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY AND

FOR EVER	July 19
JOY	May 19
JOY IN SORROW	February 13
JOY OF GOD'S PRESENCE	April 25
DITTO	December 23
JOY OF THE LORD YOUR STRENGTH	July 6
JOYFUL SERVICE	October 24
'JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT'	September 18

LEAVING HOME	February 26
LEAVING AN OLD HOME	March 25
DITTO	September 30
LESSONS OF SPRING	March 1
LESSON OF DISAPPOINTMENT	April 29
LESSON OF LIFE	September 21
LIGHT OF THE WORLD	June 26
LIGHTS AND SHADOWS	September 28
LIGHT IN DARKNESS	February 28
DITTO	September 28
DITTO	November 11
LIGHT OUT OF DARKNESS	November 25
LIFE, OUR	October 9
LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS	August 1

LIVING FOR OTHERS	November 16
LIVING IN PEACE	December 14
LOVE TO CHRIST	March 13
LOVE OF GOD	September 4
DITTO	November 2
LOVE	December 22
LOVE OF NATURE	July 1
DITTO	July 7
LOOK ON PETER, THE	September 7
LONGING FOR THE DIVINE PRESENCE .	September 27
LOWLINESS OF MIND	November 9
LOWLINESS	January 17
MAKING THE BEST OF LIFE	January 5
MANNER OF OUR DEATH	November 7
MARRIAGE	March 28
MEDITATION IN THE COUNTRY . . .	August 17
MIND AT EASE	March 27
MIDDLE AGE	August 23
DITTO	September 29
DITTO	October 13
MOTE AND BEAM	March 2
MUSIC	July 8
MURMURINGS	July 21
MUTUAL SYMPATHY	September 22
MUTUAL HELP	December 16
NEW YEAR	January 1

NEW HOME	<i>September 26</i>
NEW COMMANDMENT	<i>August 12</i>
NIGHT	<i>March 31</i>
NIGHT WATCH, A.	<i>April 4</i>
NOBLE WORK	<i>January 18</i>
NOBLE AMBITION	<i>March 3</i>
NOBLE THOUGHTS.	<i>September 19</i>
NOBLE AIMS	<i>October 31</i>
'NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE'	<i>June 28</i>
NURSE, FOR A	<i>February 6</i>
DITTO	<i>August 10</i>
OLD AGE	<i>January 22</i>
DITTO	<i>March 11</i>
DITTO	<i>November 8</i>
DITTO	<i>December 21</i>
OLD AGE, A BEAUTIFUL	<i>December 9</i>
PATH OF PEACE	<i>February 5</i>
PAST AND FUTURE	<i>March 18</i>
PATIENCE UNDER OUR SUFFERINGS	<i>March 17</i>
PATIENCE IN AFFLICTION	<i>August 16</i>
PARTING	<i>September 16</i>
PARTING WITH MISSIONARIES	<i>April 7</i>
PEACE OF MIND	<i>February 2</i>
PEACE	<i>February 20</i>
DITTO	<i>May 27</i>
DITTO	<i>August 15</i>

PEACE OF GOD	March 6
DITTO	June 19
DITTO	August 21
PERPLEXITY	December 2
PLEASURE IN LITTLE THINGS	June 5
POWER OF PRAYER	February 29
POTTER'S WHEEL	January 31
PRAYER FOR THOSE AT SEA	March 21
PRAYER	April 30
DITTO	July 13
DITTO	November 20
DITTO	December 7
DITTO	December 19
PRAYER IN PERPLEXITY	June 13
PRAYER IN JOY AND SORROW	July 3
PRAYER, TRUE	August 11
PRAYER AND PRAISE	September 20
PRESENCE OF CHRIST	February 7
PRESENCE OF GOD IN NATURE	July 16
PRIVILEGES OF MIDDLE LIFE	March 26
DITTO	June 23
PROGRESS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE	July 26
PROSPECT OF DIFFICULT DUTY	February 8
DITTO	March 16
PROSPECT OF TROUBLE	October 25
PRAISE FOR DELIVERANCE	August 18
PRAISE	January 7
DITTO	February 1

PRAISE	June 2
DITTO	June 9
DITTO	June 12
DITTO	August 31
DITTO	October 22
DITTO	December 10
PSALM CXIX	December 20
QUIET JOY	August 14
QUIET FROM GOD	October 11
RELIGION IF DAILY LIFE	January 11
DITTO	October 19
RELIGION AND DUTY	January 29
RELIGION, TRUE	November 28
REST	May 21
REST IN GOD	June 25
REST IN A BUSY LIFE	June 24
RECOVERY	May 10
DITTO	October 5
REMEDY FOR SORROW	June 21
RETURN HOME	November 5
RETROSPECT	December 29
RETROSPECT OF LIFE	December 26
'REDEEMING THE TIME'	July 18
'REACHING FORWARD TO THINGS BEFORE'	January 25
REJOICING	March 24
DITTO	April 11

REJOICING	.. .. .	May 1
DITTO	. . . . .	May 14
DITTO	. . . . .	May 28
DITTO	. . . . .	June 1
RETURNING PEACE	. . . . .	November 24
ROBIN IN AUTUMN	. . . . .	October 3
SAVIOUR, THE	. . . . .	April 19
SEA, BY THE	. . . . .	August 24
SECRET PEACE	. . . . .	November 14
SEEING THE BEST IN MEN	. . . . .	April 17
SEEKING HEALTH	. . . . .	June 20
SELF-EXAMINATION	. . . . .	January 24
SELF-ESTIMATE	. . . . .	July 4
SELF-FORGETTING	. . . . .	April 15
SEPARATION	. . . . .	August 22
SICKNESS	. . . . .	April 12
DITTO	. . . . .	May 9
DITTO	. . . . .	June 30
DITTO	. . . . .	August 6
DITTO	. . . . .	November 12
DITTO	. . . . .	November 15
SISTERLY LOVE	. . . . .	March 10
SKYLARK	. . . . .	March 7
DITTO	. . . . .	April 13
SLEEP	. . . . .	July 25
SLEEPLESSNESS	. . . . .	August 8
SOLITUDE	. . . . .	May 3

SORROW	January 16
SPRING	April 9
DITTO	April 26
SPIRITUAL DISCOURAGEMENT	June 14
STRUGGLE OF LIFE, THE	January 26
SUBMISSION	December 5
SUFFERING	May 13
SUMMER DAWN	June 4
SUMMER MORNING BY THE SEA	August 5
SUMMER DAY IN AUTUMN	October 6
SUNDAY AT SEA	April 5
SUNDAY MORNING	July 5
THANKFUL RETROSPECT	May 12
THANKSGIVING	December 30
'THEY LIVE WHOM WE CALL DEAD'	March 20
TO GO, OR STAY?	October 21
TROUBLE	April 14
DITTO	April 18
DITTO	April 21
DITTO	September 12
DITTO	September 17
DITTO	October 25
DITTO	November 21
TRUE ENTHUSIASM	August 4
TRUE LIFE, OUR	October 7
TRUE LOVE UNCHANGING	May 16
TRUE PRAYER	August 11

TRULY GREAT MAN, THE	<i>Jan</i>
TRUSTING FOR THE FUTURE	<i>Jan</i>
DITTO	<i>Nov</i>
DITTO	<i>Decem</i>
TRUST	<i>Jan</i>
TRUST IN GOD IN AFFLICTION	<i>Jan</i>
TRUST IN GOD	<i>Jan</i>
UNCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE	<i>Jan</i>
UNCONGENIAL LOT, AN	<i>Aug</i>
UNSELFISH SORROW	<i>Novem</i>
UNSELFISHNESS	<i>Novem</i>
'USE THE WORLD AS NOT ABUSING IT'	<i>Sept</i>
USEFUL LIVES	<i>Oct</i>
VARIED LIVES	<i>Novem</i>
VEXATION	<i>Decem</i>
WAKEFUL NIGHTS	<i>Febru</i>
WAKEFULNESS	<i>Jan</i>
'WALKING WITH GOD'	<i>Sept</i>
'WATCH AND PRAY'	<i>Oct</i>
WEAKNESS	<i>As</i>
'WIDOWS' MITES'	<i>Oct</i>
WINTER, THE COMING	<i>Dec</i>
WORD IN SEASON, A	<i>Decem</i>

